

COLLECTORS' EDITION

December 2020

# heartfulness

purity | weaves destiny

Tapping into Infinity

Nature of Being

Raising  
Consciousness

Younger Self

Interconnectedness

Roots of Empathy

Soul of the World

Stillness Paradox

Solution to  
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*Celebrating  
Life*

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## Celebrating Life

Dear readers,

It is hard to believe that 2020 is nearing its end. For some of us, it feels as if many lives have been lived in the span of this one year. And for all of us, it will forever be marked by the unanticipated emergence and global spread of the novel coronavirus, an event that has forced us to accept a new normal of reality, to evaluate our priorities, and to appreciate the people and circumstances that we often take for granted.

This month, in our December 2020 Collectors' Edition, we celebrate just a few of the thoughts and inspirations that have made up our monthly magazines during the last five years. We revisit articles and interviews with Daaji, James Doty, Anita Moorjani, Vandana Shiva, Bruce Lipton, Charles Eisenstein, Michael Singer, Mary Gordon, Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee, Neale Donald Walsch, Joe Dispenza, Ichak Adizes, Alanda Greene, and the artwork by Brigitte Smith and our creative team.

We dedicate this edition to the tireless frontline workers who continue to risk their lives each and every day in order to keep all of us safe.

Wishing all of you a healthy and fruitful New Year.

Here's looking at our collective future,

The editors





# inside

## focus: celebrating life

Letter to My Younger Self

*Charles Eisenstein*

08

The Nature of Your Being

*Michael Singer*

12



## thought in action

Tapping into Infinity

*Anita Moorjani*

24

Raising Consciousness

*Bruce Lipton*

26



## innerview

Roots of Empathy

*Interview with Mary Gordon*

36

Between Stimulus and  
Response

*Interview with James Doty*

42



## it changes everything

Interconnectedness

*Vandana Shiva*

52

Reconnecting with the  
Soul of the World

*Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee*

60



## be inspired

The Stillness Paradox

*Kamlesh Patel*

66

The Solution to the  
Biggest Problem in the  
World Today

*Neale Donald Walsch*

72

Living Heart Centered

*Joe Dispenza*

77



## taste of life

Agents of Change

*Alanda Greene*

84

Human Evolution - an Art  
Essay

*Brigitte Smith*

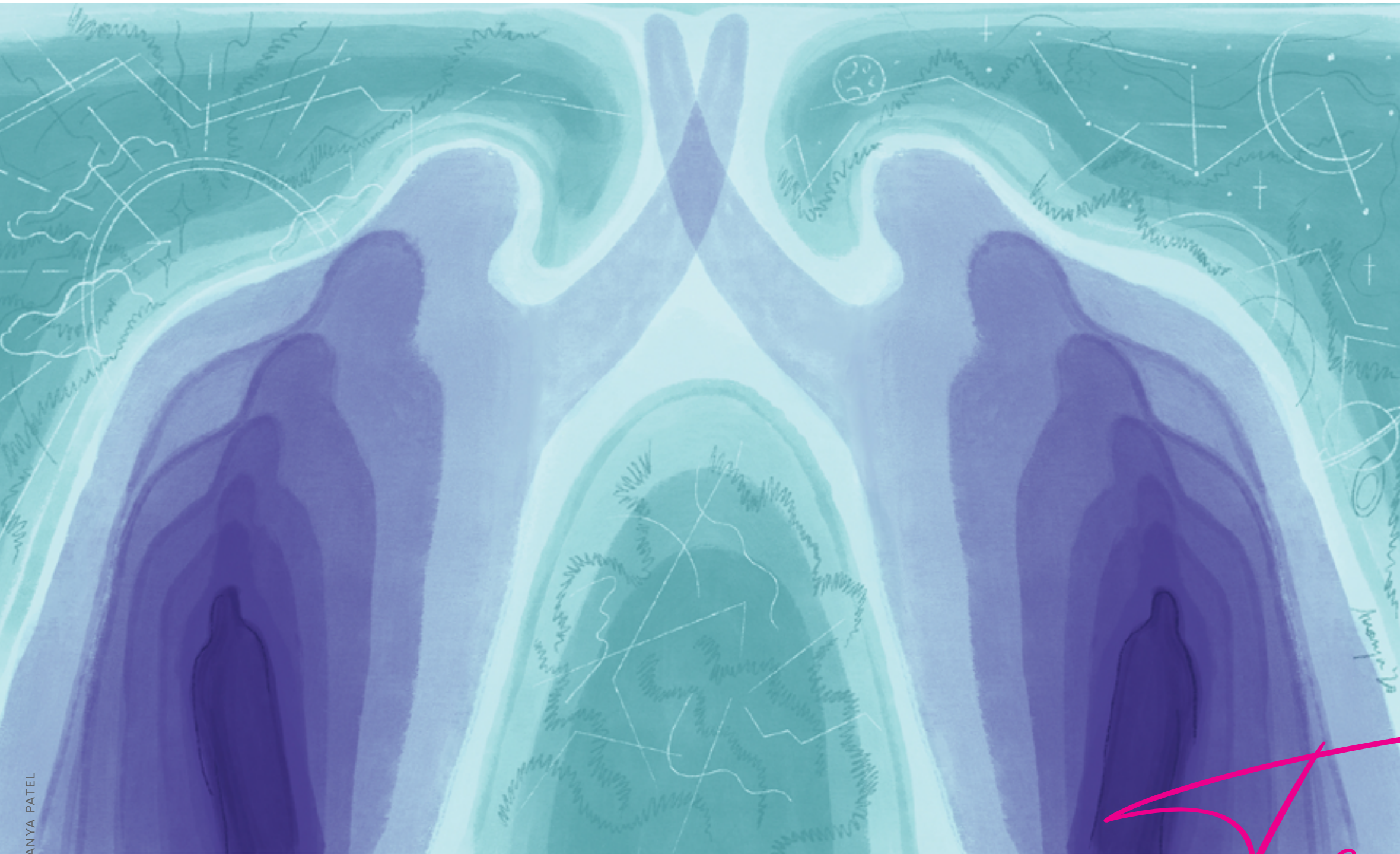
90

The Role of Laughter in a  
Marriage

*Ichak Adizes*

96





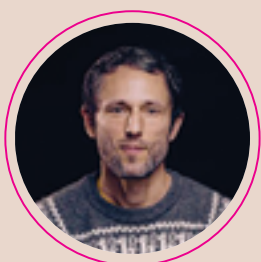
Never say any man is hopeless, because he only represents a character, a bundle of habits, which can be checked by new and better ones. Character is repeated habits, and repeated habits alone can reform character.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

*Focus*



# LETTER TO *My Younger Self*



In 2015, **ERICK JOSEPH** filmed **CHARLES EISENSTEIN** in a short interview for a younger audience. Charles wrote a short essay to accompany the film, which we have reproduced here.

## *Dear Self,*

Your secret, lonely knowledge is true. Despite all you have been told, the world that has been offered to you as normal is anything but normal. It is a pale semblance of the intimacy, connection, authenticity, community, joy and grief that lie just beneath the surface of society's habits and routines.

When you follow your passion and come fully alive, your choices will feel threatening to anyone who abides in the dominant story of normal. You will be reminding them of the path they didn't follow, and awaken in them the suppressed yearning to devote their gifts to something beautiful. Rather than face that grief, they may suppress it – and suppress you as well.

Do not believe the cynical voice, masquerading as the realistic voice that says that nothing much can change. That voice will call your dreams by many names: naïve, unrealistic, immature, and irresponsible. Trust your knowledge that the world can be different, can be better. You needn't sell out and live a life complicit in maintaining the status quo.

You have a magnificent contribution to make to the more beautiful world your heart knows is possible. It may not make you famous, but you have an important gift, an indispensable gift, and it demands you to apply it to something you care about. Unless you do, you will feel like you aren't really living your life. You will live the life someone pays you to live, caring about things you are paid to care about. You can make a different choice.

You carry a deep yearning to contribute to the healing of the world and fulfillment of its possibilities. This is your deepest desire, and if you abandon it you will feel like a ghost inhabiting the mere shell of a life. Instead, trust that desire and follow it toward whatever service it calls you to, however small and insignificant it might seem.

The most reliable guide to choice is to follow whatever makes you feel happy and excited to get out of bed in the morning. Life is not supposed to be a grim slog of discipline and sacrifice. You practiced for such a life in school, tearing yourself out of bed for days of tedium, bribed with trivial rewards called grades, intimidated by artificial consequences, proceeding through a curriculum designed by faraway authorities, asking permission to use the toilet. It is time to undo those habits. Let your compass instead be joy, love, and whatever makes you feel alive.



Powerful forces will attempt to make you conform to society's normality. These will take the form of social pressure, parental pressure, and very likely, economic pressure. When you encounter them, please understand that they are giving you the opportunity to define yourself. When push comes to shove, who are you?

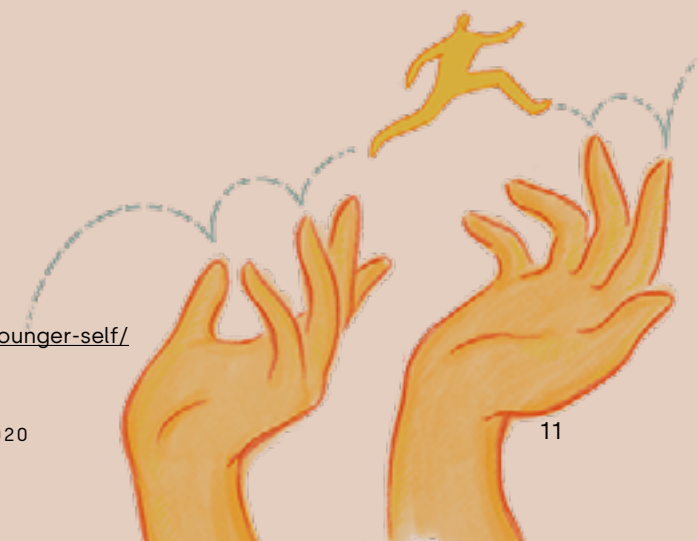
The old maps do not apply in these times of transition. Even if you try to follow them, even if you accept their bribes and heed their threats, there is no guarantee you'll reap the promised rewards. The university graduates washing dishes and the PhDs driving taxis attest to this. We are entering new territory. Trust your guidance. It is okay to make mistakes, because in uncharted territory even the wrong path is part of finding the right path.

None of this advice can be sustainably implemented by a heroic effort on your part. You need help. Seek out other people who reinforce your perception that a more beautiful world is possible, and that life's first priority is not security, but rather to give of your gifts, to play, to love and be loved, to learn, to explore. When those people (your tribe) are in crisis, you can hold them in the knowing of what you know. And they can do the same for you. No one can do this alone.

At a certain moment it will become necessary for you to go on a journey. It isn't to escape forever. It is to find yourself outside of whomever your conditioning trained you to be. You must put yourself in a situation where you don't know who you are anymore. This is called an initiation. Who you were becomes inoperative; then, who you will be can emerge.

On this path, you are sure to get lost. But you are held, watched, and guided by a vast organic intelligence. It will become visible when things fall apart – as surely they must, in the transition between worlds. You will stumble, only to find overlooked treasure beneath your feet. You'll despair of finding the answer – and then the answer will find you. Breakdown clears the space for synchronicity, for help unimagined and unearned.

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<https://charleseisenstein.org/short-reflection-essays/letter-to-my-younger-self/>





# HOW TO KNOW THE NATURE OF YOUR BEING



Author of *The Untethered Soul – The Journey Beyond Yourself*, **MICHAEL SINGER**, shares his thoughts on the nature of the mind and the heart. He also describes how we let impressions from the past and our thoughts affect our worldview and our potential, and how to handle the human heart – how to be at peace with the tremendous range of the heart.

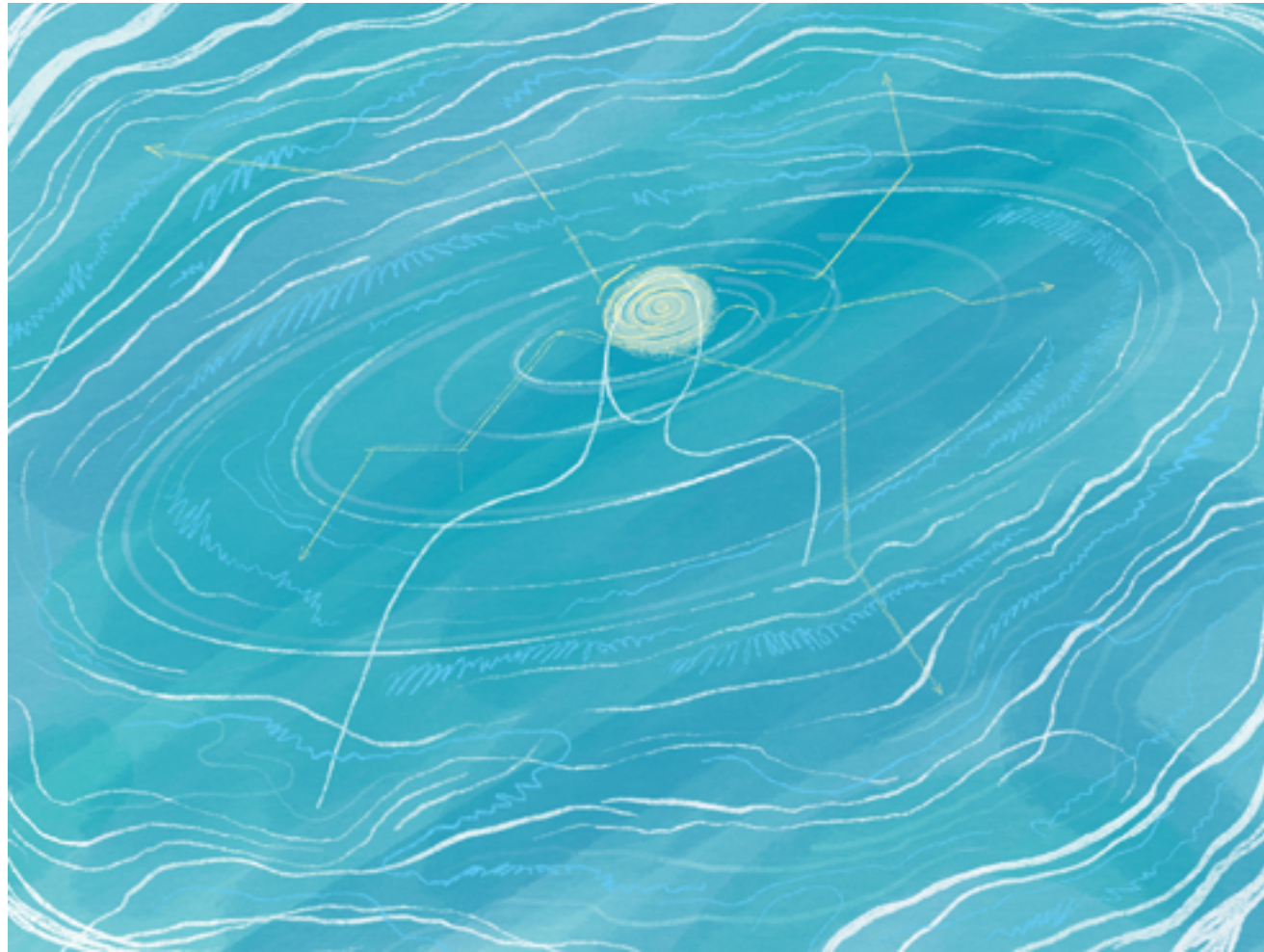
What is the nature of mind? The truth is, it is easier to understand the nature of the entire universe than to grasp the nature of mind. But this is not because the nature of mind is so complicated; it is because you can't see the forest for the trees. You can't see the mind because you are lost in your thoughts. You are so involved in your thoughts that you can't step back far enough to see what is creating them. You have to be able to get behind the mind enough to see what is not mind; then you'll be able to see what is mind. Meditation gives you this perspective. In deep meditation you see the mind from a distance, like you see a star in the sky. But if you got up really close to a burning star, you would not recognize it as one of those things that dot the sky at night – you'd see it as a giant ball of burning fire. In order to see 'star', you must be able to see 'not star'. The same is true with the mind. If you step back deep enough within your Self, you will see the mind talking at a distance – yackety-yak. But around the edges it's not doing this, and beyond the edges there is perfect stillness. In other words, in deep meditation there is absolute peace,

quiet, serenity, and total calm all around you. But if you gaze in the direction of the personal mind, there is noise. You are now able to see the thought-generating mind because you can see the still mind.

We don't maintain this perspective for long, however. We quickly get lost in the thoughts of the mind. That is why we can't see the nature of mind. In the purest sense, the mind's nature is a field of unmanifest energy that has the ability to manifest in the form of thoughts. You should see mind as an ocean of energy in which thoughts form like waves. Just as waves in the ocean come up and go back down, so thoughts in the mind come and go. Each thought is different, just as each wave is different, but they are all manifestations of the same ocean.

The mind is a field of energy that exists between you (the indwelling Being) and the world that you see. In this field of energy that is mind, there are laws that cause the wavelets of thoughts to manifest as they do. Just as scientists can study waves and understand why they behave as they do, so you can study your thoughts. You'll see that there are underlying laws that determine

You have to be able to get behind the mind enough to see what is not mind; then you'll be able to see what is mind. Meditation gives you this perspective. In deep meditation you see the mind from a distance, like you see a star in the sky.



how the mind creates thoughts. If I knew every single thing that ever happened to you during your entire existence, I would know all the data that programmed your mind. If I put it all together in the right balance, I could predict what your thoughts would be when you see something in this world. There are patterns or impressions that the mind has learned, and this underlying learning causes your thoughts to manifest in a particular way.

Your mind is the sum of your learned experiences. All the different experiences that have come in through your senses have left impressions upon the field of energy that exists as mind. Based upon these impressions, the mind generates different thoughts at different times. This is where thoughts come from. When the world of sense flows into your mind, thoughts will be created in accordance to these stored patterns. Once you see this, you'll

realize that it's been happening your entire life. Wherever the spotlight of your senses happened to be aiming, your mind was being programmed. There was no planning involved; your mind was simply programmed by the events that happened to be unfolding in the direction you happened to be looking. If one or more of those events had not taken place, or if you had been looking in a different direction, your mind would be programmed differently,

There is something even more powerful than the mind that affects how you interact with the world – and that is your heart. Your heart is quite distinct from the field of energy that creates thoughts.

and your thought patterns would be different. If you understand nothing else, please take the time to understand this.

Every single second you are experiencing such a minute amount of the world, yet these events are being stitched together in your mind and presented back to you as absolute truth. But they are not the truth, and understanding this dynamic of how the world programs your mind is essential for knowing the truth. There is nothing holy about any of your thoughts, and they really have nothing to do with you. They are just the result of the impressions that got made upon your mind. Just as you can watch the waves of an ocean come and go, so you can watch the thoughts in the mind come and go.

But that is not what you do. You actually believe in them. A thought pops up, and it becomes your whole world. You make every single decision based upon your thoughts. You practically worship your thoughts. In fact, you do more than worship your thoughts – you think you are your thoughts. If right now your thoughts suddenly start saying, “I don't like this article. I don't even agree with what it's saying” – what is that? It is just thoughts forming in the essence of mind. There is not a single thought that is not the result of your learned experiences.

The sum of all these impressions determines what you think. Then you actually say outside what your thoughts are saying inside. Your mind literally tells you what to say, and you say it. That's scary stuff, isn't it? People don't talk about this, and almost nobody explains it. There was not a single class you ever took in school, no matter how far you went in your education, that told you what was going on in your mind. Instead of teaching you about the nature of the mind, they are busy programming your mind. How are you supposed to get free?

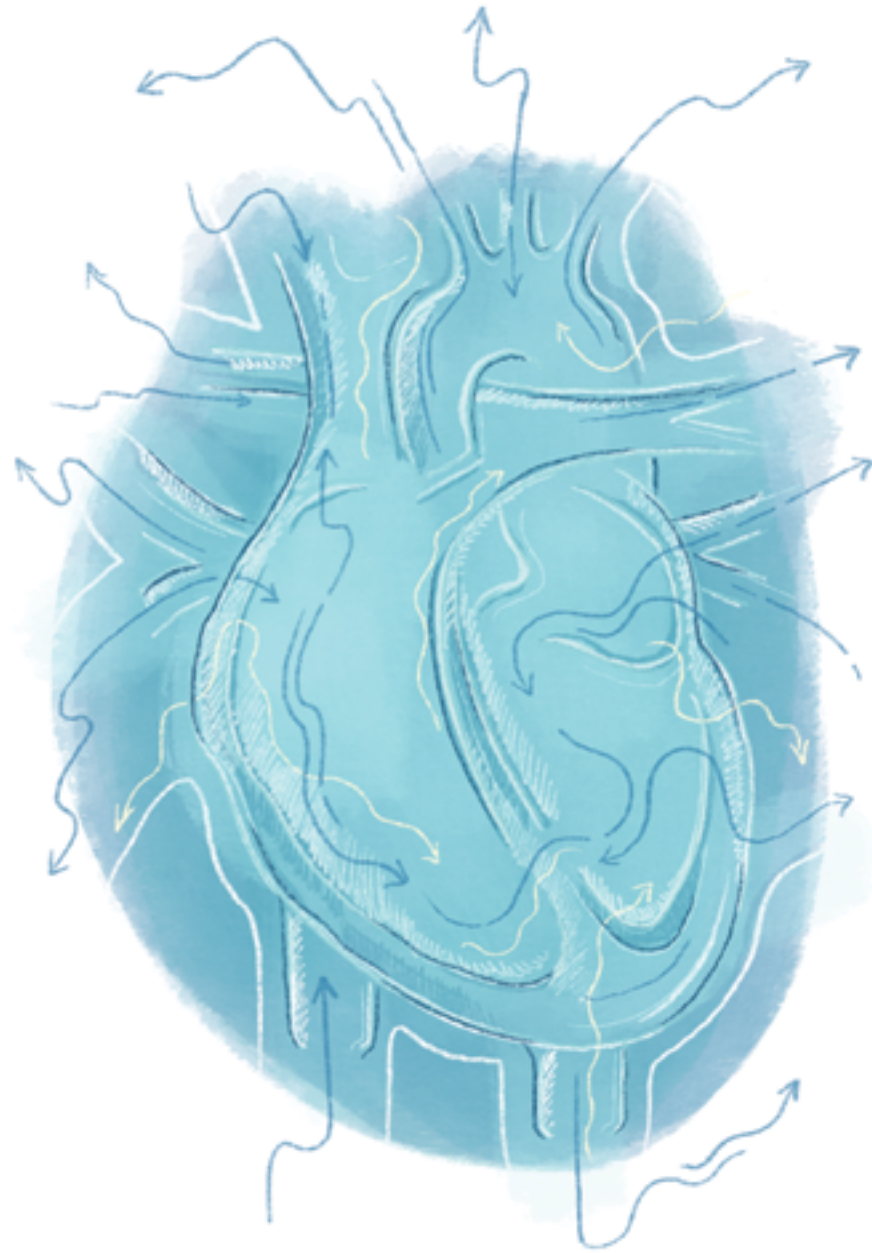
The mind reacts based upon the impressions with which it is programmed, and the ripples caused by that reaction are what you experience as thoughts. You think you are making your own decisions, but you are not. For example, you look at somebody and suddenly your mind says, “I don't like him.” That could have happened because the shirt he's wearing was somehow associated with a bad childhood experience. Your likes, dislikes, and views about everything are affected by the impressions that got made upon your mind. So how can you call them your choices? You are just following the programming of your mind.

But there is something even more powerful than the mind that affects how you interact with the world – and that is your heart.



Your heart is quite distinct from the field of energy that creates thoughts. Like everything else in creation, the heart has its own nature. The heart is best seen as an energy field with currents of different strengths flowing in various directions. These currents are like vectors of energy that can flow towards something or away from it, and they can certainly cause quite a disturbance when their flow is blocked. You experience these vector flows on a regular basis. If you see something in the world and the heart gets attracted to it, a vector of energy is formed in the heart and starts going in that direction. The next thing you know, you are drawn there. Your mind may be saying, “No, I don’t want to do this; it could cause real problems.” But the pull of the heart can be very strong in spite of what the mind is saying. This shows how distinct the heart is from the mind.

If you want to know why your heart is attracted to some things and repulsed by others, it’s pretty simple. For the most part, your heart is programmed by your past experiences – just like your mind. In yogic philosophy this programming is called *samskaras*. *Samskaras* are past impressions that have created habitual energy patterns in your heart. When stimulated by an object, the heart will tend to flow in these learned



directions. Note that it is not just objects in the outside world that stimulate the heart; thoughts can also stimulate the heart. The heart affects the mind and the mind affects the heart. But you already know this. When your heart gets attracted to something, your mind wants to think about it all the time. Your thoughts didn’t used to fixate on that person, place or thing, but now they do. Likewise, when you get really scared by something, suddenly that’s all you can think about.

Now I want to discuss your heart in a way that you may not like. Your heart is a very active field of energy with underlying vector flows, and none of it has anything to do with you. It is just one of the things you are aware of. One moment you notice you are attracted to something and five minutes later you’re repulsed by it. It happens all the time. You can feel completely attracted to someone until they say or do something you don’t like; then suddenly you’re turned off by them. This is what we call the personal heart because its energy flows are formed by an individual’s personal experiences. At any given moment, almost everybody is following either the personal heart or the personal mind. And in most cases the mind wins. The mind simply applies its logic based on its past experiences and then tells you, “I know how to make you happy.”

But the mind cannot make you happy. It will never make you happy. The mind only knows about thinking. In the end, real happiness must come from the heart. The very fact that you are in your mind thinking about how to be happy means you cannot be happy. All the mind can do is try to calculate what will make you happy based on your past experiences. One minute it likes something, and the next minute it doesn’t. You’ve had billions of experiences, and your thoughts about a current experience simply depend upon which of these past experiences is being stimulated the most. Eventually you come to realize that you’re so busy dealing with your mind’s likes and dislikes that you can’t feel the true happiness that springs spontaneously from your heart.

So are you better off following your heart than your mind? Truth is, neither will take you where you want to go. This is because neither is who you are. You are the one who experiences the heart, and you are the one who experiences the mind. If you can objectively watch something, then it is not who you are – you are the one who is watching. What do you see when you watch your heart? One thing you see is that it can open and close. You experience this as attractions and repulsions, loves and fears. You feel great inner strength when the heart is open to

You will not be able to truly explore the nature of your being until you come to peace with the world, the mind, and the heart. This is your spiritual work.

an experience, then if something closes your heart, all that energy drops out or becomes turbulent. That’s how you know you’re not your heart: you were there when the inspiration started, and you were there when it stopped. You’re the one who’s in there watching all these changes take place inside.

Over time you will come to realize that there is only one you in there. You who sees the world, you who witnesses the mind, and you who experiences the heart is the same you. There is only one conscious being in there aware of all these experiences. And none of what you see has anything to do with you. Only you, the awareness of being, has anything to do with you. When you reach this state of

The highest spiritual practice every single moment of every single day is to set the world free, set the mind free, and set the heart free. When those three are free to be true to their nature, then you will be free to be true to your nature – your true Self. This is the journey back to the nature of your being.

awareness, you are awake. But you will not be able to truly explore the nature of your being until you come to peace with the world, the mind, and the heart. This is your spiritual work.

By honoring the nature of the world, you can come to peace with it. Your work with the world becomes to appreciate it, honor it, kiss it hello when it comes and kiss it goodbye when it leaves. Because in truth, that is all it's ever doing – coming and going. God is trying to teach you something: every day a new day comes and every night it goes, never to return again. Now you see it, now you don't – like a magic trick. It has nothing to do with you; you are just experiencing it as it flows by. But the incessant activity of the mind will not allow you to honor the world. Based on its past experiences, the mind has its own idea of what should be going on, and it believes it's right. A truly wise person understands this as part of the mind's nature and does not struggle with it. The wise one simply looks at the personal mind with compassion, realizing that all it is doing is trying to solve the problems of the heart. Therefore, the best way to come to peace with the mind is to come to peace with the heart. ...

Your most important work as a spiritual being is to learn to come to peace with the tremendous range of your heart. You have to

wake up every morning and say: my heart is very interesting, and I'm going to handle wherever it goes today. You may feel tremendous love, or you may feel tremendous pain. You may go to the heights of your being and think this is the meaning of your life, or you may visit the pit of your being and think that your life has no meaning. But neither is true. These are just places your heart can go. From the seat of witness consciousness, just marvel at the tremendous range of the human heart. Love, disdain, joy, sorrow, pride, and shame are all simply places the heart can go depending upon whether it is open or closed to what's coming in through the senses or passing through the mind.

... People misunderstand the path of unconditional happiness. It doesn't mean that your heart is always feeling happiness; it means that you are always at peace with whatever your heart is feeling. Do you see the difference? There is a deep joy in your awareness of being for the honor of experiencing what you are experiencing. Tears are pouring from your eyes, but they are not tears of sorrow, and they are not tears of joy. They are tears caused by the sheer depth of experiencing what that heart has to say.

The heart is a great gift that the Universe has given you. It adds



tremendous richness to your life. But because you can't handle your heart, you are not free to explore the true nature of your being. If you want that freedom, you must learn to honor the world, observe the transient nature of the personal mind, and be able to handle the human heart. Only then can you sit comfortably in the Self; only then are you free to naturally merge into the true nature of your being.

What is the nature of your being? Christ said: "My father and I are

one." Genesis says: "God created man in his own image." That is the true nature of Self, and you are capable of experiencing this directly. Just remember every time the heart goes someplace you think you can't handle, you can choose to just breathe and relax back into the seat of Self, instead of getting involved in the heart or the mind. This is the highest yoga. The highest spiritual practice every single moment of every single day is to set the world free, set the mind free, and set the heart free. When those three are free to be

true to their nature, then you will be free to be true to your nature – your true Self. This is the journey back to the nature of your being.

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# The Mega Conservation project

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The Rainforest Project



The Deccan Plateau Project



The Food Forest Project



The Yatra Garden





The function of the mind is  
to create coherence between  
your belief and your reality.

BRUCE LIPTON

Thought in Action



# TAPPING INTO INFINITY

ANITA MOORJANI



Synchronicity and the idea of attraction have been given a lot of attention in recent years. The thought of things falling into place effortlessly because we're attracting them, is alluring, but I prefer to think it is allowing rather than attracting.

We're one with the universe, our purpose is to be our magnificent selves, and the external world is only a reflection of what's inside us. A breakdown came in my life when my focus was outward, due to the comparisons I made, and the competition this created. I used to feel that there wasn't enough for everyone, which caused greed and competitiveness. I always felt the need to convince others to think the way I did, instead of embracing our uniqueness and differences.



Once I realized that there's nothing outside my infinite self, I could begin to focus on viewing myself as an ongoing work of perfection – but in a way that's dynamic not static.

All these feelings came from the view that the universe is limited, when it's actually infinite. It's capable of growing and encompassing as much as we are. It's up to us to expand and allow in as much as we want, but it has to be done from the inside out, not the other way around.

Once I realized that there's nothing outside my infinite self, I could begin to focus on viewing myself as an ongoing work of perfection – but in a way that's dynamic not static. Like a kaleidoscope that turns from one exquisite image to the next, perfection is constantly in motion. To me, this means seeing beauty in the journey and in the apparent mistakes as they take me to another level of understanding. My aim is to feel good enough about myself to get to a point of trust, and to let go of the outcome. When I observe my own infinite nature, my external world reflects this. Then I attract what's best for me, which is also the best thing I can do for the universe.



# RAISING CONSCIOUSNESS



In April 2020, **BRUCE LIPTON** spoke with **UDAY KUMAR** about the transition our planet is going through right now, and what we need to do to raise our consciousness to the next level. In this excerpt from the interview, he goes into more detail about epigenetics, consciousness, and how we remain pre-programmed until we evolve our consciousness through meditation. It is our programs more than anything external that hack our attention.

We're made up of 50 trillion cells, and our genetic activity is not controlled by genes turning on and off, it's controlled by the chemistry of the blood, which is the culture medium for our cells. Now, we take the big blow-away steps that changed my life. The chemistry of the blood controls the genetics of the cell. So, who's the chemist? Who controls the chemistry of the blood? The answer is: The brain is the chemist! Next question: What chemicals should the brain put into the blood? The answer: Whatever image is in your mind will be translated by the brain into complementary chemistry.

There's a chemistry of love; if you're experiencing love in your life, you release dopamine for pleasure, vasopressin makes you more attractive so your partner stays with you, oxytocin bonds you to your lover, and growth hormone is released when you're in love. So, the blood has all these things that happened just from my picture of love, and the chemistry is going through. Growth hormone promotes vitality and growth, so when people fall in love they're so healthy – it's chemistry, the chemistry of love.

And if you go to the opposite side, the chemistry of fear does not release any of that. In fear, stress hormones are released, and hormones called cytokines which control the immune system are released. So now, the chemistry of the culture medium is completely different if I'm in love and if I'm in fear. The chemistry is what controls the genetics, and you control the chemistry, because your thoughts are manifesting the chemistry that controls genes.

Now, all of a sudden, you're not a victim of your genes, you're the master of your genes, because your consciousness is going to manipulate those genes to manifest what's in your consciousness. So

Your consciousness is  
the master of your genes.  
Your life becomes the vision  
in your consciousness.  
Your thoughts are  
creating your world.

if you're afraid of the flu, what's going to happen? Well, you're going to open up your immune system to get the flu, because you're preparing for what? **The function of the mind is to create coherence between your belief and your reality.** If I have a belief that I'm going to get the flu, the function of the mind is to do everything to ensure that I get the flu. If I'm programmed to believe that I'm going to die in three months because I have cancer, the function of the mind is to shut me down so that my truth will manifest in three months and I will die.

I said to myself, "Do you understand what's going on here?" Your consciousness is manifesting your genetics and your behavior, and I want to add one more piece to it, epigenetics. Genetic control is



There are two parts to  
the mind, and they  
don't have the same  
function and they don't  
learn in the same way  
– the conscious mind  
and the subconscious  
mind. The subconscious  
mind is programmed.

what people are programmed to believe in, which means this character, say breast cancer, is under genetic control and not in your hands. Epigenetics is the new science, epigenetic control. Sounds like the same one, but what's 'epi'? It means above. Epigenetic control is control above the genes – that's all the difference in the world.

If the genes are in control I'm a victim, but if the control is above the genes then I'm the master. So, epigenetics takes us from the victim of heredity to the master of our current existence. First of all, the environment, the blood is controlling genetics. Now, what's above that? The brain, because the brain is making the chemistry. And what's above that? Consciousness. **Your life is manifested by your consciousness.**

The most valid science on the planet is quantum physics. There is no other science that has been tested more, verified more, it's the most truthful. The first principle of quantum physics is that consciousness is creating your life experience. Biology, epigenetics, quantum physics all say the same thing; biology and physics come together at this point.

And the relevance is to understand where's your consciousness. If you think it's passive, that it's just coming in and out, then you've got it all wrong. Your consciousness is the master of your genes. Your life becomes the vision in your consciousness. Your thoughts are creating your world. This is what I wrote *The Biology of Belief* about; as individuals, you and I, we are creating our life experiences with our consciousness. But we also have a lot of shared consciousness, a lot of shared belief, and that's what led to my second book, *Spontaneous Evolution*. If a lot of us have the same programming, then each head is a tuning fork and consciousness is broadcast. This is the important part. People think their thoughts are in their head, and we can read this with an EEG. But now there's a new device called the Magneto Encephalogram where the probe is not in your head, it's held away from the head.

What does this mean? **My thoughts are not contained in my head.** My thoughts are broadcast into the field, so I'm creating a field of consciousness around my head. And I love this quote by Albert Einstein, "The field is the sole governing agency of the particle." The field is the invisible energy around us, the particle is the expression of energy as matter, not real matter, it's an energy because everything is energy in quantum physics. The field (invisible energy) is the sole governing agency of that particle. Your thoughts are a field, and it's shaping this particle called the body. That's quantum physics.

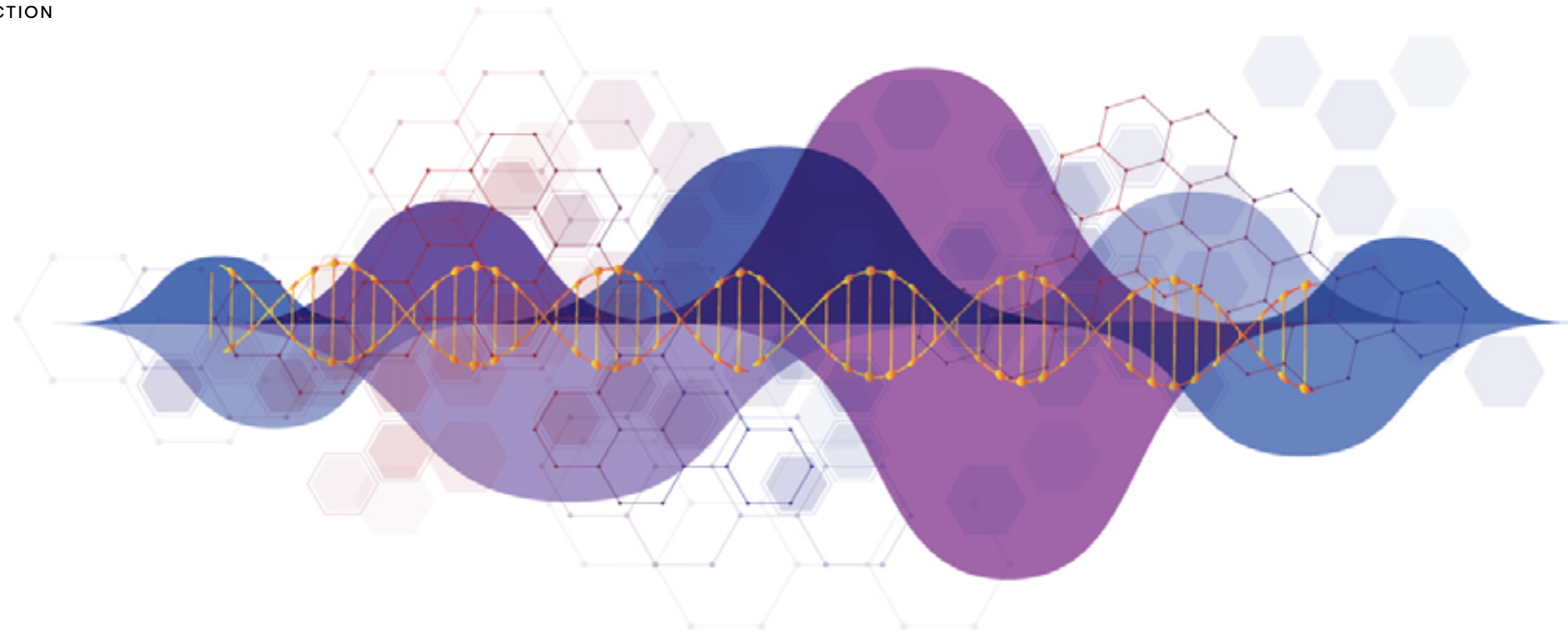


The body is like a vehicle, there's a steering wheel, and the mind is driving the vehicle. Now, there are two parts to the mind, and they don't have the same function and they don't learn in the same way – the conscious mind and the subconscious mind. The subconscious mind is programmed. Some of it is instinct, like when a ball comes at your face and you blink, but mostly it's learned. You learned how to walk by the age of two, that's a program; but once you learned it, it's in your subconscious and for as long as you live you'll be able to walk without thinking about it, unless you break it all up. The programs are concerned with how we live, even how we move, all of our actions. The child in a family of a musician will learn music, because that's the environment they were in when they were programmed. It's downloading – while the parents were talking music, playing music, the child was like a video camera, recording. Children

grow up like their parents because that's where we got the program.

So, I get off the ground using a program in the first seven years, and I have a vehicle with a driving wheel, but I have two minds. The subconscious is programmed mind, and I get driver education. How you learn how to drive a car from someone and you download that program, is exactly like you were taught by them. At age seven, consciousness kicks in – what's different? The subconscious mind is habits and programs; the conscious mind is creativity. Now, you can imagine, you have imagination. And if you take this imagination and drive the vehicle with it, you can create your imagination. In the creative mind, I get to put my hands on the wheel and drive. Towards what? Your imagination, wishes and desires. So your conscious mind, when driving is going to take you to your





wishes and desires. Whereas the subconscious mind is going to take you to the destination according to the program.

And here comes the crux of the problem, and this is why meditation comes into the picture. First of all, you have to realize this: The conscious mind, when it's driving the vehicle, is taking you to your wishes and desires, but the conscious mind can think. When the conscious mind is thinking it's not looking out; a thinking mind is looking in. So, if I ask you, "Tell me what you're doing on Friday." Well, if you're going to answer that question and it's not written right there in front of you, where are you going to get the answer? You're going to go think about it. And when you are thinking you're looking in.

Now, the moment you're thinking, you're not paying attention. What if I'm walking down the street or driving a car and I'm not thinking?

Am I going to crash the car or walk into a tree? When the conscious mind is busy thinking, the subconscious mind is on autopilot. Whatever you're doing is now going to be taken over by the subconscious mind. You know how to walk, you know how to drive the car, you know how to talk, and do your job, because these are habits. The subconscious mind is more powerful. If you're going to crash the car, the subconscious mind will take over. It's more powerful and faster; the conscious mind is too slow. So, the subconscious mind may function better than the conscious mind when driving.

And now the issue is this: You are engaging in subconscious behavior, but your conscious mind is not observing them because it is looking inside at a thought. So, while you're thinking, you won't consciously see your behavior because you are still thinking. So the moment you're thinking, your biology is run by the subconscious autopilot. And

while you're doing that you won't see your behavior because your attention is not looking out, it's looking in.

I tell people that somewhere in your life you had a friend and you knew your friend's behavior very, very well, and you happened to know your friend's parents, too. One day you see that your friend has the exact same behavior as their parent, so you want to tell your friend, "Hey, Bill, you're just like your dad." I say, back away from Bill because when he hears this he'll say, "How can you compare me to my dad? I'm nothing like him!" He'll get mad. And everyone laughs because everyone's had that experience. This is why the story is so profound. Everyone else can see that Bill behaves like his dad, except Bill.

What's the meaning of this? The answer's simple. Bill is thinking, and when he's thinking, he lets go of the control. The autopilot steps in, and where

was that programmed from? His dad. So, whatever he's going to do in autopilot mode is a direct play from the dad's program. But why can't he see it? Because why is he playing it? He's playing it because he's not paying attention. He can't see his own behavior, because he's not looking at it when it's playing.

Well, that is 95% of the day for the average person. 95% of the day they're running on programs, and they do not see it, they only see the result. Why is that important? If I have a bad program, I come home at the end of the day and my life sucks. And if I didn't see the program, like Bill, and I didn't see that I was sabotaging myself, I'm going to say, "Who sabotaged me?" In our minds we blame other people – I wanted to be successful, but when I let go of the program my father's behavior took over, he has a crap program and I come home at the end of the day, none of it works and I'm thinking, "I wanted to be successful but I'm





a victim of the world.” This is 100% wrong. We manifested that. But we did it unconsciously in the way Bill did it; we didn’t see the behavior, we sabotaged ourselves. We see the result and it’s not what we want, and then we blame other people.

What we have to do is recognize the fact that we’re not running our own life 95% of the time, we’re running on a program. ... You’ve been programmed, and this is the world. This idea of programming hasn’t been lost. It’s even better today, people are getting programmed better today than they ever were before.

Look at an infant carrying an iPad.

Ancient people knew this, and when the controls started to come in, when people realized, “I can program you,” the game changed. It became a power game, where the powerful people programmed the less powerful people. There’s a book called *Rich Dad, Poor Dad* by Robert Kiyosaki and Sharon Lechter, and everything that we just talked about is the basis of that book. If you came from a rich family, as a kid, you unconsciously downloaded how to be successful, as compared to a poor kid who downloads every reason why they’re not successful, and they perpetuate it. Rich Dad, Poor Dad is epigenetics.

So, we come full circle, and therefore, if we are not in control of our consciousness, we are victims of our subconscious programming. Exercises that re-empower conscious thinking are exercises to take back power over our life. From a quantum physics point of view, our experiences are all based on consciousness; from a biological point of view, our experiences are programming our health, our genetics, and our behavior. There’s agreement there and that’s the coolest part. We must take back control of our consciousness. People don’t even know they’re using it; they still think in their minds that they’re controlling their lives with their thoughts. So, when life doesn’t work out, they say, “It wasn’t me because my thoughts were successful, and look, I’m not successful and I am now the victim.” To that I say, “It’s because you’re unaware of where your consciousness is. Consciousness is not controlling 95% of your life; your program is. So, meditation techniques and the programs you’re involved with are fundamental programs of exercising your consciousness, which by definition emphasize your power over life. If you’re not conscious, you are the program.

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pointing to our own hearts  
to discover what is true isn't just  
a matter of honesty but also of  
compassion and respect for what we see.

PEMA CHÖDRON







# Roots of Empathy

MARY GORDON was interviewed by JUDITH NELSON at the Spirit of Humanity Forum in Iceland in 2019. In this excerpt, she shares her worldview on the importance of empathy in human relationships and how it forms the foundation for the program she runs in schools on developing empathy in schoolchildren, called *Roots of Empathy*.

**Q:** Thanks for joining me, Mary. Can I ask you about empathy, as your work is especially with empathy?

Well, my understanding of empathy is the ability to feel with the other person, not just to understand how they feel, but also to have the capacity to feel with them. And I think that empathy is the number one attribute of being human, and we have too little of it in the world, and it's a shrinking commodity. But I also focus on empathy because when you have cruelty, when you have racism, when you have violence, when you have genocides, when you have any of the big horrific things in the world, the common ingredient is the absence of empathy.

My work is informed by that conclusion, which I came to a long time ago, and also the conclusion that empathy develops in the first year of life, in the loving relationship between parents and babies. And so, our work is about increasing empathy in childhood. And we do that by bringing the relationship between parents and babies, during the first year of the child's life, into the classroom.

The *Roots of Empathy* program has the schoolchildren sit around a green blanket, with the mother and baby and an instructor. There is a curriculum, which the children don't see, but which informs what goes on. And the children are coached to observe the baby's intentions, and the baby's feelings. We're talking about a two-to-four-month-old baby who can't walk, can't talk, but can communicate *hugely*, bringing parents to tears, and bringing them to their knees. They can really communicate! So, as the children come to understand how the baby feels, they learn the vocabulary of their own emotions. And it's the job of the *Roots of Empathy* instructor to ask the children, "When was a time you felt like the baby?"



We want children  
to be kind,  
to be considerate,  
to be collaborative,  
to be caring,  
and that's what the  
*Roots of Empathy*  
children are.

In the work of *Roots of Empathy*, the symbiotic relationship with the parent is called an attunement – the attachment and attunement of the parent to the baby. Here we're talking about harmony – one to the other, and to the universe, and to concepts of peace.



... There are different curricula for different ages of children. It is quite remarkable how the children increase their empathy. We have a lot of research that shows when empathy goes up aggression goes down, and prosocial behavior goes up. We want children to be kind, to be considerate, to be collaborative, to be caring, and that's what the *Roots of Empathy* children are.

**Q: Is there a relationship between empathy and harmony?**

Well, harmony is such a beautiful word. Harmony has a musical reference, but really it's a symbiotic word. The whole universe is in harmony and it's in equilibrium. When a newborn baby is born, she or he is discombobulated, and has to seek through the parent (through the mother usually) a way to feel all of their feelings, and to become attuned to the parent. And in the work of *Roots of Empathy*, the symbiotic relationship with the parent is called an attunement – the attachment and attunement of the parent to the baby. Here we're talking about harmony – one to the other, and to the universe, and to concepts of peace. So, I use the term "harmony."

Children can reflect and listen to birdsong, and feel the rustle of leaves, or the waves in the ocean. They can very easily adjust your heartbeat to be in harmony with your whole sensibility to be in harmony with the world. We do that more readily than being in harmony with the world.

**Where to ask yourself what children need in the world to help them develop values, and how you say?**

There are basic human values: The right to life and inalienable rights of people, dignity, participation. People who come



here typically share a purpose. They might have different avenues, but there is a common denominator of peaceful coexistence on many levels, and, in the *Roots of Empathy* work, we're really helping children find a sense of balance in their lives. Number one is that they respect and love themselves, have self-empathy. Because, if you don't love yourself, and if you don't have empathy for yourself, you don't have the ability to love others or to have empathy for others. The problem with the absence of empathy in the world, the decline of empathy, which can be a generational thing, is that if a little baby is not parented empathically, and if the parent is unable to understand and attune to the baby's needs, the child doesn't develop the capacity to attune to the needs of others, to have empathy.

... And I think the basic human trait that we need in the world is empathy. If you have that, honesty emerges out of it, respect emerges out of it. When we say to the little children in the *Roots of Empathy* classroom, "So, when baby Henri grows up and comes to school, what would you think if people say 'You can't play'?" the children in class are horrified that anyone would be mean to their little baby. They all fall in love with the baby, and they see the vulnerability and humanity in the baby. During that year, they come to find their own vulnerability and their own humanity, and also their strength. And then they see the strength in humanity and in others.

It's almost as if empathy is the "cure all," the secret sauce of life. If we can just empathize, it's a little





bit like the Golden Rule: If you understand how someone is going to feel, why would you hurt them, why would you exclude them, why would you say you're somehow less human than I am? It removes the possibility of dehumanizing one another and hiving people off and saying, "Your difference makes you unacceptable." We celebrate difference in *Roots of Empathy*, and it's not visual, it's not the typical differences of culture and language, of size, or whatever.

We talk about the difference in our innate temperament; that a baby comes to the world with a predisposition to see that world in many ways. Some babies are very intense and emotionally reactive. It's very hard to parent a baby who's very intense. In the classroom, it's very hard to teach

a child who's very intense, because they are super reactive. They have temper tantrums; when they are disappointed they have a big reaction. But, if the little baby has a big reaction, nobody says, "You're a bad baby." Nobody says, "Go to your room." Everyone helps the baby learn to deal with the big feelings, and what that does is soften everybody to realize, "Wow, I am like the little baby, too. It's not a moral flaw if I'm very emotionally reactive. It's who I am." And the job of teachers and parents and mentors is to help children recognize who they are, and help them to live in the world that is. It is not to squash them, but to help them understand their reactions. So, when we think about the traits and qualities we need in growing up, I think we really need a lot of self-love, giving us the capacity to love others.

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# BETWEEN *Stimulus* & *Response*



In this excerpt from an interview done in August 2016, **DR. JAMES DOTY** is interviewed by **JOHN MALKIN** about the science of meditation, the evolutionary advantage of compassion, aspects of human behavior that relate to compassion and collective social issues, and his cherished memories of the remarkable woman who gave him a helping hand up when he was a boy.

*"It's only when we focus on healing the wounds of the heart that there's ever going to be peace in the world. All the science and technology are not going to do that."*

*Dr. James Doty*

**Q:** Tell us about the Center for Compassion and Altruism Research and Education (CCARE) that you founded at Stanford University. Sometimes people think compassion is internal, vague and hard to describe, and that exploring compassion is a soft science. How are you studying compassion and altruism and what are you finding?

There's been a lot of interest in how the brain responds or reacts to meditation and this research has been going on for the last three decades, initially led by Rick Hanson. But what is interesting to me, and remains interesting, is that what is at the core of many of these meditative practices is compassion: compassion for yourself certainly, and compassion for others.

As I looked at this area, I realized that our survival is related to nurturing and caring for our offspring. And in the human species this involves caring not only for our offspring but for others as well. As a result of this requirement – that our offspring are nurtured for a decade and a half or more after birth, unlike other mammals that just run off into

the forest after birth – our offspring require us to essentially teach them, while they mirror our behaviors, so that they will survive. Yet the cost of that to our species – to the parents or the mother – is huge with regard to time, resources and energy. Without that nurturing, caring and bonding, our offspring don't survive.

As a result, deeply ingrained or hardwired into our brains is a reward system based on us caring for others, primarily our offspring of our own species, but also caring for all beings. What happens is that the areas associated with reward increase their metabolism when we actually care for others. This is a deeply ingrained part of who we are, and what we are, as a species.

As we evolved from the nuclear family in a hostile environment to hunter-gatherer tribes in a hostile environment, in groups of ten to fifty, this requirement that we alleviate suffering or care for and nurture others was even more important. Because if an individual in our tribe or our group was suffering, it meant that potentially they could not do their job. If they did not do their job it





could put the whole group at risk. So our ability to read emotional states, micro facial expressions, body language, and even interpret smells, was critically important as we evolved as a species.

Then when we domesticated animals and plants, this led to us having more time. But it's interesting if you look at how society and religion have functioned; at the core is this absolute requirement for cooperation, caring and nurturing others. In fact it has been shown through a variety of studies that short-term ruthlessness cannot benefit a species. For a species to survive long-term requires the cooperation of the individuals in the group. Certainly this is central to the survival of the human species.

In regard to the creation of the Center at Stanford, I was at a point in my life where I started thinking about these things. As a result, from that research

and interest, I realized that understanding how the brain responds to these situations, and how compassion affects our physiology, is really critically important.

As it turned out, there were a few people exploring this area. I then gathered an informal group of scientists at Stanford and we began some preliminary studies looking at some of these issues. Then it struck me that it would be wonderful to have the Dalai Lama come to Stanford to speak. That was in 2007 and as a result I ended up having a meeting with His Holiness.

At the end of our conversation, the Dalai Lama agreed to come to Stanford and was so impressed with the work that he wanted to make a personal donation. It was the largest donation he had ever given to a non-Tibetan cause at that time. That was incredibly overwhelming and moving, and it

What we know is that all of us are born with a certain genetic potential for those types of behaviors, but most of us don't maximize or potentiate them with intention, because we don't know how or we don't appreciate how beneficial they can be.



set the stage for others to make donations to this work and ultimately to formally create a Center at Stanford.

Q: It is beautiful how that came about and evolved over time. I suppose some people might say that humans are born either with compassion or not, or that certain groups of people have it or they don't. I am guessing that you would say that compassion is something that can be cultivated quite systematically. Is that so?

I think that is exactly right, and your previous statement is also absolutely correct. Essentially, we are all born with a set of genes that define our attributes. But, that being said, many of us don't utilize those attributes or maximally cultivate them. What I mean, as an example, is that there may be an individual who has significant genetic potential to be a long distance runner, but if he is never put into a situation to run long distances then that will never manifest. Frankly, the same is true with compassion and, in fact, happiness. What we know is that all of us are born with a certain genetic potential for those types of behaviors, but most of us don't maximize or potentiate them with intention, because we don't know how or we don't appreciate how beneficial they can be.

The other interesting aspect of gene expression is that we also know there are individuals, for example sociopaths, who are born with a disconnection in their brain that limits their ability to understand the emotional states of others. There are individuals who have gene receptors that limit their ability to respond to those transmitters associated with nurturing and caring, like oxytocin. This leads to individuals not responding the same way to a particular situation: a "normal" person would respond empathically whereas this person



would not do so, or not at the same level. Genes do play a part but we also know that we can cultivate or maximize our potential for compassion by certain practices.

**Q: Tell me about the experience you had as a kid growing up with a father who drank a lot, where there was violence in the home; somewhat familiar territory for a lot of people growing up in America. And when you were in the 8th grade you happen to meet this woman named Ruth at a magic shop and she taught you meditation and concentration techniques.**

I grew up in poverty, my father was an alcoholic, and my mother had had a stroke and was partially paralyzed, chronically depressed and had attempted suicide multiple times. Neither parent had gone to college. We were on public assistance and this is not the environment for a child that is typically associated with success.

Although I was intelligent and to some degree self-aware, that actually made the situation worse. I had the insight that I essentially had no ability to change the situation, no resources and no access to knowledge. I had a sense of despair and hopelessness. I was unhappy and angry. I was angry at my situation and at my parents.

So one day at the age of twelve I walked into a magic shop and there was a woman behind the counter. She was an Earth Mother type. I asked her about some of the things in the magic shop and she laughed and brought her head up to look at me, because she was reading a paperback at the time. She explained to me that she knew nothing about the magic in the store. She said it was her son's store and she was simply sitting there while he ran an errand.

She was the kind of person we meet rarely, whose presence radiates goodness and kindness. Their smile is radiant and they embrace you and you feel calm and comfortable in their presence. She immediately sensed that I was troubled, and she paid attention to me and asked me some questions, which was unusual for a child in my position.

At the end of fifteen or twenty minutes of conversation, where she queried me about my background and interests and hopes and aspirations, she said to me, "I'm here for another six weeks and if you come every day I'll teach you something that could change your life." I wish I could tell you that I had some incredible insight that led me to show up, but the fact of the matter is that I had nothing else to do and she'd given me some cookies during our conversation. So I showed up.

In the course of that interaction it was apparent retrospectively that this woman had significant knowledge of Eastern philosophical practices. She understood from her own experience that you can change your own brain. Although it wasn't named at the time, what she was talking about was neuroplasticity.

So for the next six weeks, we spent an hour or two together every day, and she taught me what I describe as "Ruth's Tricks: one through four."

### **The first trick is to relax the body.**

Many of us carry around the emotions that we have in our muscles and that this distracts us from being attentive. The first thing she taught me was this concept of relaxing the body and learning attention and focus. She did this in ways that we now know as the typical practices associated with Buddhism or meditation or mindfulness. To really be a success, one has to be able to attend and focus



and respond to emotional states and have insight into them.

### **The second trick is to tame the mind.**

This is understanding the reality that there is a dialogue going on in one's head that we often think represents us or is us, but in fact it's simply a dialogue that is made up of all the words, feelings and baggage that we collect growing up. And for many of us this is negative. It is a dialogue that says you're not good enough, smart enough, or talented enough to do x, y or z. It is self-limiting.

She made me realize this reality and understand that this dialogue – she used the analogy of a radio station – was like being tuned to a particular radio station that wasn't particularly helpful. She taught me the practice of being able to notice those words

and let the words flow by without emotionally responding.

What many of us forget is that when we hear these words or have this type of internal dialogue, it affects our peripheral physiology, often times in a very negative way by stimulating the sympathetic nervous system and all the deleterious effects of the low-level stress hormones. Then the mind shuts off to possibilities. I learned to sit with this without having that emotional response. And ultimately she taught me to actually change the dialogue so that it was not one of criticality but one of self-compassion and affirmation. In doing so, it changed how I saw the world. What I thought were impairments to my ability to succeed, or limitations of my possibilities, were suddenly removed. And that was absolutely critical.



### The third trick is to open your heart.

Frankly, at that age, I did not take it to heart as much as I should have. And understanding that the greatest gift we can give is not only being kind to ourselves, but being of service and kind to others. And to interact with others always with this idea that the mere presence of another is a wonderful thing and everybody has something that you can learn, and everyone can give love.

### The fourth trick is to cultivate clarity through visualization techniques and cultivate your intention.

By doing so it allows you to do almost anything. That's not to say that when you do this practice it is a straight line from point a to point b. To get to where you want to be there may be hills and valleys and detours, but ultimately, by utilizing these techniques, it places within your subconscious this incredibly strong motivation that you are moving in the direction to fulfill that desire. Even without your knowledge. Certainly that's mitigated by the fact that these should be desires that benefit yourself and others and not work in a negative context.

Those were the four lessons Ruth taught me that allowed me to go from the mindset of limited possibilities to unlimited possibilities.

**Q: It's a beautiful story that moved me a lot.**

Engaging in positive mental states, and the cultivation of compassion with intention, changes everything. When I finished my interaction with Ruth after six weeks my personal circumstance had not changed one iota ... but *everything* changed. And the reason everything did change was that I went from having negative emotions associated

with my situation to simple acceptance of my situation. I had a different type of mental state. My mental state changed to one of happiness, acceptance and gratitude. I was able to forgive those who had hurt or wronged me. I had no anger towards my father and mother, because I understood that they had their own struggles and were dealing with their own pain.

I say that situations have no power. It is us who give them power. I was able to go back to my situation understanding this, having these insights, and when I changed my mental state and took away the anger, despair and hopelessness then the world changed in how it interacted with me.

What has allowed me to have the success I have had is looking at the world with gratitude, practicing forgiveness, being compassionate to



myself and others, recognizing the dignity of every person and practicing equanimity and humility. I understand that my purpose is to be of service to others, to embrace others and to give people unconditional love. That allows me to walk in the word and allows the world to embrace me.

**Q: I'm reminded in what you just said about the statement of Viktor Frankl that is something like: between the stimulus and the response there is a space and it's in that space that we find freedom.**

I think that is exactly right and Viktor Frankl is one of my heroes. He had this understanding that between stimulus and response is a pause and it is within this pause that everything occurs. And it is learning how to sit with this pause, and how sitting with that pause, if you have the right intention and

you have self-awareness and you have practiced the things that we have spoken about, then your response is completely different.

And it's the response to things that changes everything. As an example, often times we are approached by people who are angry or upset about something, and our natural inclination is to give that back to them in the same fashion. Yet if we take a moment to pause and think about the reality, these negative emotions and behaviors have nothing to do with us. They are a response to a set of events that occurred perhaps before the person met with us; a negative interaction with a spouse, some negative information about something they cared about.

When we are able to pause, this decreases our reactive nature and we don't go into a state of engagement of our sympathetic nervous system. As a result we are able to be much more thoughtful, clear-headed and creative, which leads to a better world. This is really the summation of all that we are talking about, when we talk about war, anger or negative effects on the environment; these are all conditions of the human heart.

Throughout our lives many of us receive wounds of the heart. For most of us these heal quickly, but for some these wounds of the heart are deep. As a result, it is these wounds of the heart that are responsible for negative behaviors. It's only when we focus on healing the wounds of the heart that there is ever going to be peace in the world. All the science and technology are not going to do that. It is when we go inside of ourselves and practice the things we were discussing, acting with an open heart – those are the only things that can heal these wounds.



An aerial photograph of a vast forest landscape at sunrise. The sun is a bright, glowing orb in the upper right sky, casting a warm, golden light across the scene. The forest is covered in a thick layer of mist or low-lying clouds, which catch the light and create a hazy, ethereal atmosphere. The trees are silhouetted against the lighter sky and mist. The overall color palette is dominated by warm tones of gold, orange, and brown, with the green of the trees appearing muted in the distance.

it changes  
everything

All things share the same breath –  
the beast, the tree the man ...  
the air shares its spirit  
with all the life it supports.

ATTRIBUTED TO CHIEF SEATTLE



# Interconnectedness



In 2017, **DR. VANDANA SHIVA** spoke with **KIM HUGHES** about the sacredness of the Earth, the work she has been doing to bring awareness and change in the field of sustainable agriculture, and the importance of understanding our interconnectedness with Nature, and how we can change the way we eat.

**Q: Dr. Shiva, you have been working tirelessly for years to bring awareness and change in the field of sustainable agriculture and ecological diversity, in India and around the world. Have we progressed? What are some of your most satisfying achievements to date?**

I think the recognition that the Earth is sacred, the rights of all her beings are inviolable, is growing. This is what has inspired me to spend a lifetime in the service of the Earth and defending the rights of those people who depend upon the Earth.

In terms of what are the satisfying achievements, one is saving this valley where we are sitting, which is my birthplace. I returned here because the ministry had asked me to do a study on potential mining in this region, and our study stopped the mining going ahead. It was the first case in India where the Supreme Court ordered that commerce had to stop if it was destructive in taking away people's life support systems.

I think the recognition that the Earth is sacred, the rights of all her beings are inviolable, is growing. This is what has inspired me to spend a lifetime in the service of the Earth and defending the rights of those people who depend upon the Earth.



We could instead start functioning within the reality that we are members of this Earth family. We are not outside the Earth, we are part of the Earth, and any violence to any strand of the web of life is violence to ourselves. That waking up will help us recognize the limits we must respect, rather than following the illusion of limitless growth.

The work I started to do with saving seeds has been satisfying in and of itself, because seeds are such important teachers of renewability, generosity and diversity, and all of that has guided my work.

Regarding the legal issues, I'm satisfied that having woken up to how seeds were under threat, and starting seed saving, I was able to work with our government and our parliament to put laws in place that defend the integrity of seed – Article 3J of our patent laws. I was asked to help draft the Plant Variety and Farmers' Rights Act so that we have the rights of farmers written in black and white. I was asked to help draft the Biodiversity Act, which makes it an obligation to protect biodiversity.

Then there are the things we started, such as the Community Biodiversity Register, documenting what is there, and all of that is now government policy. I can go to the remotest area and people are collecting this indigenous knowledge.

Then there have been the legal victories against the big giants, for example, our struggle against the patenting of neem. We fought it for 11 years and won. Basmati rice from Dehra Dun was patented by a Texas company, but we had that reversed. The wheat of India was patented by Monsanto and they also had to give up that patent. We were entering a new age of colonialism where instead of grabbing territory and saying, "This is ours," they were now grabbing life, biodiversity, indigenous knowledge and saying, "We are the inventors." And I think we put a brake on that bio-piracy epidemic. It still happens, but it would have been the norm if we hadn't stopped it. It is now the exception.

I think that studying the Green Revolution, when the Punjab erupted in violence and the Bhopal tragedy took place, we've now been able to show that we can grow more food while protecting the



Earth. We can feed two Indias through ecological farming. Our farmers earn ten times more by not being addicted to poisons.

So each of these things is on the one hand inspired in a deep way by the integrity of the Earth, and on the other hand has also managed to reverse some of the really destructive assumptions of industrial agriculture and the greed associated with industrial globalization.

**Q: Thank you. You are very modest – you didn't mention the international influence you have had. I am aware of your trips to Geneva and your current work with ecocide and the rights of planet Earth, which leads us to the next question: what are the most pressing ecological issues of our time? What are a few practical things that all of us can do to bring change for the better?**

I think that the most important ecological issue of our time is to stop this illusion that we are separate from Nature, that we are masters of the Earth, and that we can manipulate the Earth and other beings as we want. Because whatever we do to other creatures, some privileged powerful human beings also do to other human beings.

We have driven other species to extinction a thousand times faster than normal rates. We are also doing so much to drive the human species to extinction with the disasters we have created. But this is not inevitable. We could instead start functioning within the reality that we are members of this Earth family. We are not outside the Earth, we are part of the Earth, and any violence to any strand of the web of life is violence to ourselves. That waking up will help us recognize the limits we must respect, rather than following the illusion



of limitless growth. It will help us create a better world for ourselves and others by using less. Because it is not the case that by predating on the Earth we are having better lives.

The single thing everyone can do is change the way we eat. Eating right is an important step. We are today eating food that is the result of industrial farming. It is nutritionally empty, toxic and uniform, and does not meet the needs of the planet or our own needs. 75% of the ecological destruction on the planet is because of industrial farming and a globalized food system. 75% of the diseases are related to that same food system.

So we need to change our eating to be more conscious, recognizing that we are the food we eat – it is not separate, it is not a commodity, it is not fuel for our body as a machine. We are living, sacred temples, and food is itself a sacred gift. We have to bring that sanctity back. We have an ancient saying, “Anna Brahma,” meaning food is the creator. The creator is embodied in the food.

So in the simple act of eating, we can start protecting the planet, we can start reversing climate change, we can start reversing species extinction, we can start solving the water problems, we can reverse desertification and we can build up our health. And it would be stupid not to take that small step.

**Q: India is a fast emerging nation with a young population. How can the youth best participate in a new paradigm so they have a hopeful future?**

First, we are not emerging from anything! We are an ancient nation, and the word “emerging” was given to us by the globalized economy, which has treated us as an emerging market for itself. An ancient civilization of 10,000 years doesn’t emerge, it evolves. It evolves to the next step.



Now the next step could be a very smudged photocopy of the failed western paradigm of consumerism, resource exploitation, competitiveness and dissatisfaction. It is a paradigm that is designed to destroy work. Youth has no place in that paradigm, because it cannot create work.

How do we make sure that young people in India are able to have a future? I think the first thing is to learn the deep principles of our civilization, of an ecological civilization. To learn from people like Gandhi the dignity of labor, where he would spin cloth as the way to freedom, rather than say, “I am going to be a serf in a giant mill or a giant garment industry.” He recognized that climbing another step in slavery is not progress, but breaking out of a slavery system is liberation.

We need to learn from the Buddha, who was also born in this land, the teaching of compassion. The current economic model teaches us how to be cruel, how to be brutal. And India is living that brutality, whether it is in violence against women, raping 2-year-old babies, or murdering 7-year-old children in school. This is not the India I know. This is an India that has become distorted. It is wasting too many lives. We need to reclaim India. And reclaiming India is where the youth will have a place.

**Q: What is your vision for humanity? Where are we headed? How will we get there?**

My vision is that we are human to the extent that we recognize non-human life and our dependence on it. Our humanity does not come from separation. Our humanity does not come from how violent we can be, and how exploitative can we be. That is not being human. Being human means being part of the Earth, having compassion, spreading love.



We have to move from  
hubris to humility. We  
have to move from  
narrowness of the  
mechanistic mind and  
the monoculture of the  
mind to the ecology of  
the mind, a mind that is  
part of the whole.

My dream, first and foremost, is to continue to do what I have done for more than 50 years, but also respond to the new challenges. A brilliant scientist like Stephen Hawking said that either we will be extinct in 100 years or we will escape to other planets. My response to him is, “You guys of science, the powerful ones, have escaped too many times and trampled on too much.”

It is irresponsible to destroy this Earth, to be violent against Mother Earth, and continue that hubris by trying to colonize other planets and calling that a planetary civilization. I would call it the fiction and illusion of planetary imperialism.

What we need to know is the limits that guide us on this planet and respect those planetary boundaries. With this we become more human.

The deeper we are in living within the limits of the Earth, living within the limits of social justice, living within the limits of respect for all, the deeper is our humanity. Our civilization knew this in the past, but it has forgotten it, and is now remembering it and joining with other civilizations, including those that have forgotten it for longer. We are all seeking. Not only are we seeking to know how we have a future as a human species, but the future of our human species depends on recognizing that all other species have a right to a future and we do not have a right to extermination, pushing others to extinction.

We have to move from hubris to humility. We have to move from narrowness of the mechanistic mind and the monoculture of the mind to the ecology of the mind, a mind that is part of the whole.

**Q: Does spirituality have a role in this paradigm of change? Some people believe that you can only change the world if you change yourself – it all has to come from within through meditation. Having stayed on your farm for the last month, I see a dual way, as there is so much we also need to do to live in community, to grow food, and to regain our connection with the earth. Can you comment on that?**

Well we do meditate out here, but we don’t meditate all the time. I think the crass materialism that came out of greed has created a reaction of spirituality that is defined only as the inner life. But the basic principle of spirituality is to know the interconnectedness – that there is no divide between the inner and the outer. Every violence we do to the Earth comes from a degradation of our own spiritual being. Every aspect of our spiritual being that becomes more conscious stops harm to all others. Just like there is no divide between humans and the Earth, there is no divide between spirituality and material life. Every life is sacred. That’s when true spirituality will be reclaimed.

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REJOINING THE GREAT CONVERSATION:

## Reconnecting with the Soul of the World



**LLEWELLYN VAUGHAN-LEE** delivers a heartfelt plea to all of us to open our hearts and care for our Mother Earth, value her sacredness, and reconnect with her soul.

We are present at a moment in our shared destiny when the Earth is crying out to us to help her in this time of crisis that is destroying her ecosystem, the fragile web of life that supports her multihued unity. All around us are what Thich Nhat Hanh calls the “bells of mindfulness” – we can hear them ringing in the unprecedented species depletion (such as the recent awareness of what is called the ‘insect Armageddon’, with a 45-75% loss of insect biomass), the oceans filling with plastic at a rate unfathomable a few decades ago, and accelerating climate change; all with unforeseen consequences. And, on a different level, though just as painful, is the loss of wildness and wonder, a diminishing sense of the sacred that nourishes our souls.

Many of us are responding with action and ideas, even as our governments and corporations – with their focus on economic growth and materialism – are unable or unwilling to make this a real priority. This was forcefully articulated at the recent UN Climate Change COP24 Conference by the 15-year-old activist Greta Thunberg, who spoke truth to power when she said: “We have not come here to beg world leaders to care. You have ignored us in the past and you will ignore us again.

"You only speak of green eternal economic growth because you are too scared of being unpopular. You only talk about moving forward with the same bad ideas that got us into this mess, even when the only sensible thing to do is pull the emergency brake. You are not mature enough to tell it like it is. Even that burden you leave to us children. But I don't care about being popular. **I care about climate justice and the living planet. ...**" (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VFkQSGyeCWg>)

Our Earth is a being with a soul as well as a body, what in the West we called the *anima mundi*, the soul of the world, and what the Kogi in the Sierra Nevada in Colombia call *Aluna*, the spiritual intelligence within nature.

This last sentence brought tears to my eyes, as my soul heard her speak about real care for the Earth – for this living, beautiful being who has given us life, who has nourished us with her endless generosity, even as we have abused and desecrated her, raped and pillaged her body, which our culture regards greedily as just a ‘resource’ for our endless use and abuse.

But behind Greta’s phrase, “the living planet,” is a deeper truth that calls out to our forgetfulness. As was known to the ancients and to indigenous peoples, our Earth is a being with a soul as well as a body, what in the West we called the *anima mundi*, the soul of the world, and what the Kogi in the Sierra Nevada in Colombia call *Aluna*, the spiritual intelligence within nature. Until





we recognize, remember, and reconnect with the spiritual nature of the Earth, the primal intelligence within all life, we will be walking in the darkness of our forgetfulness, unable to find the way to work together with her, to start to heal and transform the living oneness to which we all belong.

Every butterfly, every bee, every waterfall, every dream we have, is a part of this living, spiritual being. She is ancient beyond our understanding, even as she is crying out at this moment. The greatest unspoken tragedy of this time is that we have forgotten her living sacred presence, and this is the silent censorship that has clear-cut our consciousness. In the West, when the early Christians violently banished paganism, they burned the books that understood her magical nature<sup>1</sup>; and now, as the web of life is being torn apart, we do not even know how to respond. We

do not know how to access her wisdom, how to return to being a part of the great conversation that belongs to all of life. We remain stranded on the desolate shores of materialism, as in a supermarket where the shelves are increasingly empty.

Spiritual Activism is an emerging field that calls for a spiritual response to our present global crisis – to our present social divisiveness and ecological devastation, to our self-destructive identification with an old story of separation rather than embracing the living story of life's interdependent oneness. Yes, we desperately need to reduce carbon emissions and pesticides, to stop turning rainforests into ranchland or palm oil plantations. But there is also a call to reconnect with the sacred within creation, with the spiritual lifeblood of the planet. Otherwise we will just be continuing the same one-sided conversation that has caused this devastation. We need to work together with the

Earth, to include her wonder and wisdom. We need to reconnect with her soul.

And this is a work that we each can do. It does not need governments or big organizations; just individuals whose hearts are open and who have heard the cry of the Earth. Within our own being we can make this connection, and so help to bring the sacred alive again in our own daily life and the life of the Earth. There are many different ways to reconnect. In a recent book, *Spiritual Ecology: 10 Practices to Reawaken the Sacred in Everyday Life*, I outline a number of simple spiritual practices, from walking in a sacred manner, to cooking with love and cleaning with awareness.<sup>2</sup> Whatever our practice, this foundational work is not complicated, but rather simply requires our attention, real mindfulness. It can empower us to make a real contribution to enable humanity to rejoin the great conversation, the sacred relationship with the Earth that was part of the Original Instructions given to our ancestors.

The Earth will continue. We are now living through the sixth mass extinction of species in her history. It is our shared future that is uncertain: whether we will keep to our ancient promise to witness her wonder and beauty, honor her sacred ways; or whether we will continue our present path, stumbling through an increasingly soulless wasteland, caught in consumerism, until the sea levels rise, the air becomes too toxic, the oceans too acidic, our souls too desolate. Again, in the words of the young activist Greta Thunberg, “We have run out of excuses and we are running out of time.” But she also said, “Change is coming.” The real question is whether we are open to being a part of real change – for hearts and hands to help the Earth, for our souls to reconnect with the magic and mystery of her living being.

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<sup>1</sup> Beginning in the fourth century, the early Christians banned or burned up to 90% of pagan or pre-Christian writings. Of some pagan philosophers only fragments now remain (Catherine Nixey, *The Darkening Age: The Christian Destruction of the Classical World*).

<sup>2</sup> The chapters 'Walking', 'Simplicity' and 'Cleaning' have been published in previous issues of Heartfulness Magazine.



be



Don't forget love;  
it will bring all the madness  
you need to unfurl yourself  
across the universe.

MIRABAI

inspired



THE EVOLUTION OF CONSCIOUSNESS SERIES

# The stillness paradox



In 2017, **DAAJI** continued his series on the evolution of consciousness with an article on the paradox of stillness that manifests with an expanding and evolving consciousness.

*He who can no longer pause to wonder and stand rapt in awe,  
is as good as dead; his eyes are closed.*

—Albert Einstein

The above quote of Einstein resonates with some ideas I have been thinking about lately on consciousness. Imagine a beautiful flower blooming in the garden. If you run past it you will not be able to appreciate its beauty, whereas if you are walking by you can enjoy it more, and if you stand still in front of it you will appreciate its beauty even more. If you are flying, then you will not even see the flower below you on the earth. So when we are moving rapidly, we miss out on many things.

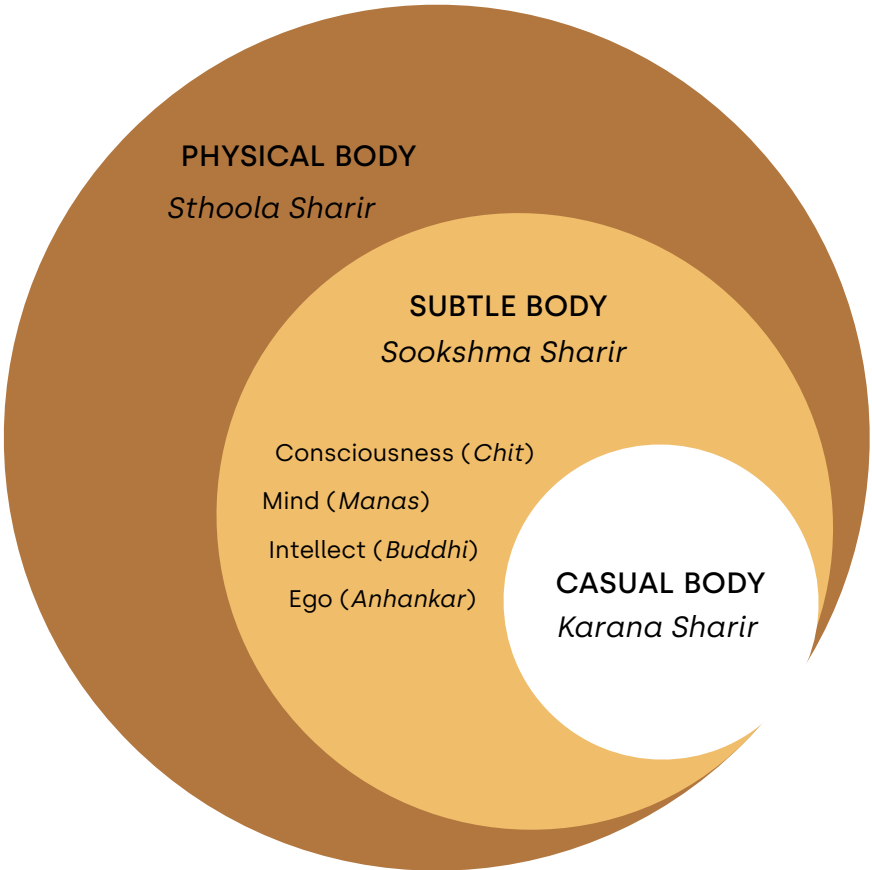
The mind is even faster than any physical movement. When the mind is moving rapidly from one object to another, one subject to another, one

venture to another, what you miss is the blooming of the flower that is inside you. You are not merely missing out on the details, you miss out completely on the existence of the flower itself.

Now what is that flower? It is your soul.

Let's explore this idea further and ask a question: is it possible to move at speed and still be present in each moment? Can we reach a critical speed where we stand still in movement?

To understand this better, let's revisit the diagram we have of the various bodies of a human being.







The soul is the center of our being, around which we have the four main subtle bodies that we know as the mind. The first is consciousness, the canvas that is the field or fabric of the subtle body. Then there is the ego, which is our identity, so it is also deeply entwined with the individual soul. Then comes intellect, which allows us to discern and make choices, and then at the surface level of the mind we have the thinking function. And then there is the physical body, which is the outermost layer. If noticed keenly, it is always the 'subtle' that supports the 'less subtle' in its wake. The soul is the subtlest, followed by consciousness, ego, intellect, mind and finally the physical body, and hence the

origin of the sequence in the order mentioned above.

Think of a wheel. The very centre of the wheel is quite steady, without movement, whereas the circumference of the wheel experiences maximum movement. Similarly, the center of a tornado, the eye, is in utter stillness. If you want to be calm, position yourself in the center of the tornado and keep moving along with it, and then nothing will affect you.

And what is your center, around which the vortex of life exists? It is your soul.

Let's explore the physical end of the spectrum. The five senses are given to us for a noble purpose, but we are so busy using them for our pleasures at the physical level that we misuse them. For example, we have eyes so that we can look around and protect ourselves and see things better; that is their main purpose. But we use the eyes for a different purpose that is desire-based, drawing us outwards, creating a vacillating mind and disturbance. Then we are unable to focus on our center. If we focus on the steadiness of the soul, we will stay centered.

Consider it from another angle: the earth is revolving around the sun while spinning on its own axis at a very high speed. If you are seated at the Equator you will have maximum exposure to that movement at almost 1000 miles per hour, whereas if you are at the North Pole you will feel as if you are stationary, as you are on the top of the axis. So the key is to find that axis within yourself.

How is this possible? It is possible only when you match your movements with those of your axis. And what are those movements all about? The ability of your mind to settle down.

The great yogi, Ram Chandra of Fatehgarh, said that it is the settledness of the mind on a subject that brings happiness. If that settledness is not there, then you will be jumping from one thing to another without any resolution. You will not have any closure, you will not have any satisfaction, and you will not have any peace. You will still be vacillating and dissatisfied all your life, and you will not have learned anything from all your activities.

So settledness is the key. When you meditate you must feel settled. Or putting it another way: if the meditation is done correctly you will automatically feel settled.

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Now settledness does not mean inactivity; in fact it is activity at a dimension we have never conceived of before. When you have a subject to study, a business venture to work upon and a conversation with your child, your mind should be steady on them. At the same time your mind should also be steady on any other thing that you need to attend to. The steadiness should be there. It is not that when you are fully attentive to one thing you are less attentive to another. One does not rob your mind of capacity for the other.

It depends on how you develop your capacity to expand your consciousness. As you progress, you will not feel that you are thinking or contemplating, as it just becomes a part of your nature. It is like developing any other capacity. For example, when little children have to add 2+2 a lot of thinking is involved, but as a teenager you can





have a complex equation in your mind and work on it, no longer needing to think. You are able to contemplate. When you advance a little more, you are neither thinking nor contemplating, as the answer comes just like that.

The nature of the soul is movement and thinking, and in the early stages of a spiritual practice, you learn to focus and think clearly. Later on comes expansion, which means you develop 360-degree consciousness. Still later, when you reach higher realms of human consciousness, it is 'as if' you are everywhere at the same time. Consciousness is of a nature where you have gone beyond expansion, and that is why there is stillness, which happens when things are moving extremely fast.

So let's look at it from the perspective of infinite movement versus perfect stillness. What is infinite movement? We can understand this by considering the physics of movement. If you go from Detroit to New York by car, you will go at a certain speed; let us say you take 8 or 9 hours. If you take a flight, you will arrive there in an hour and fifteen minutes. If you take one of those old supersonic flights, by the time they announce you are taking off you are already landing. If you fly at the speed of tachyon particles<sup>1</sup>, you can be in New York and Detroit at the same time. Now why is this relevant to infinite movement?

When we go beyond certain frequencies in Nature, it seems as if there is nothing happening because of the enormity of the speed with which things are moving. You can think of it like a child's spinning top. When it is spinning the fastest, and is perfectly balanced, it looks as if it is not moving at all.

As we move inwards towards our center, something similar happens; we become subtler. As we become subtler and subtler, the frequency within also changes. The transformation follows the progression from matter to energy to Absolute. In such a profound state of being, it appears as if nothing is happening inside. But actually so much is happening at the same time! The 360-degree awareness is so rapid that it is almost real time.

For example, even before another person speaks, you have felt what they are going to say, understood and responded. Nothing is holding your mind, or you can say that your mind is able to settle on everything simultaneously. You can be absolutely settled on your spirituality, and you are also settled on your business decisions without becoming either disturbed or elated about them. There may be a hundred things that you are planning in your life, but if you have the ability to move from one to another at lightning speed, why worry?

The idea of all yogic practices is to make the mind still and steady so that it can resonate with the stillness of the soul. So all our efforts towards the eight steps of Patanjali's Ashtanga Yoga – *Yama*, *Niyama*, *Asana*, *Pranayama*, *Pratyahara*, *Dharana*, *Dhyana* and *Samadhi* – are for the single purpose of creating stillness in the mind.

The outer stillness of the mind is then able to match the inner stillness of the soul. Everything is integrated.

This is the state known as *Sahaj Samadhi*, and to achieve this state is why we meditate.

<sup>1</sup> Purported to travel faster than the speed of light



# THE SOLUTION TO THE BIGGEST PROBLEM IN THE WORLD TODAY

NEALE DONALD WALSCH addresses the underlying cause of our global dysfunctions today and challenges us all to solve them, together, through one single decision. Are we ready for this?



We – you and I – have a chance to solve the biggest problem in the world today. All we have to do is make a single decision. But so far we haven't been able to make that decision, because the biggest problem in the world today is that most people don't know what the biggest problem in the world today is.

Now that's remarkable, because this problem is so huge, it is causing all of the other problems, all of the 'smaller' problems, that we hear about every day. That includes global warming, planetary political upheaval, worldwide economic disparity, endless wars, and widespread individual frustration and dissatisfaction with the conditions of life.

All of these predicaments are the fallout, the direct result, of one pervasive condition. That condition can be described in one word.

Alienation.

Human beings are alienated from each other. And we're experiencing more alienation every day. Overnight we've found ourselves in bigger versions of an 'Us Against Them' world than most of us have ever encountered before.

Nothing that's gone wrong with the world is our fault. Nothing. We're not responsible for any of it.

Alienation inevitably arises in the aftermath of ongoing citizen frustration. And citizen frustration inevitably arises in the aftermath of ongoing societal dysfunction. And societal dysfunction inevitably arises in the aftermath of ongoing systemic failure.

Not a single piece of it. It's all *their* doing.

It's those unwanted immigrants, those unsatisfied minorities, those unhappy women, those right-wing radicals, those left-wing nut jobs, those unacceptable gays, those uninformed students, those dumb conservatives, those empty-headed liberals, those unmotivated government assistance recipients. It's those 'others' who just keep making things difficult.

Not everyone feels this way, of course, but everyone can *feel* everyone who feels this way. So it's affecting all of us. Each day it's producing distressing headlines, angry blogs, name-calling speeches, childish rants, attacking tweets, bullying diatribes, finger-pointing tirades, and violence-laden actions.

And not just 'over there'. It used to be 'over there', in that other country, in that other town, in that other place. But now it's right here, in our own town, in our own country, and sometimes, sadly, in our own hearts.

Why? Because alienation inevitably arises in the aftermath of ongoing citizen frustration. And citizen frustration inevitably arises in the aftermath of ongoing societal dysfunction. And societal





It is the idea that we are separate from each other and from God that has generated the conditions that have produced – and continue to create and tolerate – the predicaments.

dysfunction inevitably arises in the aftermath of ongoing systemic failure. And that's exactly what we're faced with here. Long-term, ongoing, systemic failure.

None of the systems we've put in place to make life better for all of us are working. There are some rare exceptions, but in the main, most are failing to produce the outcomes they were intended to produce.

Wait. It's worse. *They're actually producing the opposite.*

Our political systems, our economic systems, our social systems, even our vaunted worldwide Internet systems, are hurting us, not helping us. And, saddest of all, our spiritual systems, which so many had hoped would bring us closer to God and closer to each other, have done exactly the opposite.

All of this can be reversed, however, and all with a simple flip of humanity's Belief Switch. We merely have to turn off our belief in Separation.

It is the idea that we are separate from each other and from God that has generated the conditions that have produced – and continue to create and tolerate – the predicaments mentioned earlier.

Are you aware that still today, in the first quarter of the 21st century, 1.5 billion people have no access to clean water? That more than 1.7 billion still have no electricity? That nearly 2.5 billion of our fellow humans still live without indoor plumbing? *That's one quarter of the human race.*

Now one might argue that these are but inconveniences. Yet hundreds of thousands die each year as a result of the unhealthy conditions arising out of these 'inconveniences'.

And consider this: Every hour more than 650 children die of starvation on the planet.

Could any of this occur if our species as a whole embraced a consciousness of Oneness? No. So what is being invited today by Life Itself is a movement on the part of every individual not just to be *aware* of our Oneness, but to *live* it.

For humanity, this has become the essential path. This is what it will take for us to move forward with our evolution on Earth. And we can do this by making one simple decision.

Put into question form, the decision for all humans comes down to this:

1. Are we temporary physical beings, or are we Eternal Spiritual Beings Manifesting Physically?
2. Are we completely separate entities, or One Essence Manifesting Individually?

Basically, the question is, "What is our True Nature?" Our life as it is now being lived offers us a chance to demonstrate our answer. And this is something that each of us is doing, right here, right now.

Should we choose to write a New Cultural Story, one which announces and declares that

What is being invited today by Life Itself is a movement on the part of every individual not just to be aware of our Oneness, but to live it.

humans are Spiritual Beings and All One – united with each other and with The Creator – everything would change on this planet. Our motivations, our intentions, our objectives, and our interactions would be altered at every level. Our relationships in this civilization – nation-with-nation, religion-with-religion, race-with-race, conservative-with-liberal, man-with-woman, straight-with-gay, young-with-old – would become civil at last.

Our problem of Alienation, our idea that violence is a legitimate means of addressing differences, our condition of insufficiency and our unnecessary suffering endured by billions ... all of this





and more would disappear from the Earth, dissolved by new ideas of ourselves that would quickly induce the abandonment of our most damaging self-concepts.

Does this mean we would create a life on Earth without a single concern or challenge of any kind? No, of course not. Adopting the idea that we are Spiritual Beings, One Being, is not about creating a science-fiction-esque utopian society. But we *can* create a planetary community of far more

loving, peaceful, safe and joyous people, thriving and not constantly struggling, relaxed and not continually straining, celebrating and not endlessly competing or opposing.

Can we do it? Can our species embrace a Consciousness of Oneness, of Unity with each other and with The Divine? I believe we can. And there are many tools we can use. All we have to do is intend to do so, and our intention will act as a powerful magnet, with

the awareness of those tools and how to use them being drawn to us from many sources – not the least of which may very well be the magazine you are reading right now.

So read on. And read often. And commit to living the truth, if it is your truth, that We Are All One.

This article is adapted from Neale's book *The Essential Path* (June 2019). Neale Donald Walsch may be reached for personal interaction at [www.CWGConnect.com](http://www.CWGConnect.com).



**DR JOE DISPENZA** shares some thoughts on heart-brain coherence and moving from thinking to knowing through the instrument of perception we know as the heart.

# Living Heart Centered



Since our human ancestors first began etching their histories upon cave walls and stone tablets, like a thread through the needle of time, the heart has appeared as a symbol to represent health, wisdom, intuition, guidance, and higher intelligence. The ancient Egyptians, who referred to the heart as *ieb*, believed the heart, rather than the brain, was the center of life and the source of human wisdom. We know that the heart, beyond its obvious role in sustaining life, is not simply a muscular pump that moves blood throughout our body but an organ capable of influencing feelings and emotions. The heart is a sensory organ that guides our decision-making ability as well as our understanding of ourselves and our place in the world. It's a symbol that transcends time, place, and culture. It's a commonly accepted premise that when we are connected to the

heart's inner knowing, we can tap into its wisdom as a source of love and higher guidance.

Every thought you think produces corresponding chemistry equal to that thought, which in turn creates an emotion. Therefore, you are suggestible only to the thoughts equal to your emotional state. We now know that when our students are heart centered and feel more wholeness and oneness, they're less separate from their dreams.

When they feel gratitude, abundance, freedom, or love, all of those emotions welcome corresponding thoughts. Those heart-centered emotions open the door to the subconscious mind so that you can program your autonomic nervous system equal to the thoughts of your new future. We also know that if they live in the feeling of fear or lack but try to think they're abundant, they

can't produce a measurable effect, because change can only happen when thoughts are in alignment with the emotional state of the body. They can think positively all they want, but without a corresponding feeling or emotion equal to that thought, the message cannot be felt or understood throughout the rest of the body.

So you could repeat the affirmation *I am fearless* until you're blue in the face, but if it's *fear* you're actually feeling, the thought *I am fearless* never makes it past the brain stem, which means you're not signaling the body and ANS into a new, specific destiny. The feeling is what produces the emotional charge (energy) to stimulate your ANS into a different destiny. Without the feeling, a disconnect remains between your brain and body – between the thought of health and the feeling of health – and

you can't embody that new state of being.

It's only when you change your energy that you can produce more consistent effects. If you sustain these elevated emotions on a daily basis, eventually your body, in its innate intelligence, begins to make relative genetic changes in the way I described earlier. That's because the body believes that the emotion you are embracing is coming from an experience in your environment. So when you open your heart center, practice feeling an emotion before the experience occurs, and marry it with a clear intention, the body responds as if it's in the future experience. That heart-mind coherence then influences your body chemistry and energy in a series of ways.

If coherence between the heart and the brain can originate in the heart, and their synchronization results in optimal performance and health, then you should be taking time every day to focus on activating your heart center. By intentionally choosing to feel the elevated emotions of the heart rather than waiting for something outside of yourself to elicit those emotions, you become who you are truly meant to be – a heart-empowered individual. When you are living by the heart, you naturally choose

love and innately demonstrate it through compassion and care for the well-being of yourself, others, and planet Earth. Through our partnership with HMI, our students have demonstrated that with practice, we can in fact produce, regulate, and sustain elevated feelings and emotions

– independent of events in our external world.

In our workshops around the world, through the practice of regulating heart rhythms to sustain elevated emotions, we teach our students how to generate heart and brain coherence. We then

Heart-centered emotions open the door to the subconscious mind so that you can program your autonomic nervous system equal to the thoughts of your new future.







measure their abilities using HRV (heart rate variability) monitors. During guided meditations, we ask our students to surrender to the feelings of gratitude, joy, and love, and we encourage daily practice outside of our formal instruction, because when one chooses to practice sitting in a state of coherence, it becomes a habit.

I hope that with enough practice, our students can replace old mental scripts of feeling unworthy, fearful, or insecure with more elevated states of being and fall deeply in love with their lives. We've seen enough of them demonstrate that it is indeed possible to produce positive, measurable, tangible effects in their lives simply by shifting the paradigm of their thoughts and feelings. These dedicated individuals return to their homes, where the positive effects they've produced in their own lives ripple out to positively affect their families and communities, continuously expanding their vibrational influence of harmony and coherence throughout the world.

By repeatedly practicing the regulation of heightened emotional states, in time the constant feeling of elevated emotions creates a new emotional baseline. This baseline

then begins to continuously influence a new set of thoughts equal to the heightened feelings. The summation of those novel thoughts creates a new level of mind, which then produces more corresponding emotions equal to those thoughts, further sustaining that baseline. When this feedback loop between the heart (body) and mind (brain) occurs, you are in an entirely new state of being – the consciousness of the unlimited mind and the energy of profound love and gratitude. The repetition of this process is what it means to recondition your body, rewire your brain, and reconfigure your biology equal to your new state of being. Now you are naturally, automatically, and regularly broadcasting a different electromagnetic signature of energy into the field. This is who you are, or who you have become.

Countless history books could be written through the lens of incoherent emotions. Whether the result is a Shakespearean tragedy, genocide, or a world war, survival emotions such as blame, hate, rage, competition, and retribution have resulted in an endless, unnecessary trail of pain, suffering, oppression, and death. The results have caused humans to live in opposition and conflict rather than in peace and harmony. This

is a time in history when we can break that cycle. This is a pivotal moment in the story of humanity where ancient wisdom and modern science are intersecting to provide us with the technology and scientific understanding to learn not only how to more efficiently and effectively manage our emotions, but also what that means for our health, relationships, energy levels, and personal and collective evolution. It doesn't require moving mountains – only changing our internal state of being. This allows us to alter the way we act with one another, replacing stressful situations with positive experiences that give us energy, fill our spirit, and leave us with a sense of wholeness, connection, and unity. The brain may think, but when you turn your heart into an instrument of perception, it knows.

Excerpt reprinted with permission from *Becoming Supernatural: How Common People Are Doing the Uncommon* by Dr. Joe Dispenza. It can be found online at [hayhouse.com](http://hayhouse.com) or [amazon.com](http://amazon.com).



# Taste

Though our paths are many,  
we are made  
one community in love.

BELL HOOKS

# of Life





# Raspberries

## AS AGENTS OF CHANGE



**ALANDA GREENE** explores the topic of perception, through her experience of picking raspberries in the garden, and understanding the importance of looking at life and situations from different angles.

pick thoroughly and am convinced that every ripe raspberry, with the tug of thumb and finger, has slid from its cream-colored conical core. Then I kneel, lean down and look up at the low branches to see if any remain. It is not one or two ripe berries now before me – it is dozens. Again, I pick all I see, drop them in the container hanging from a belt at my waist and move on. While plucking from the other side of the row, I look through the sun-dappled leaves and see an abundance of ripe berries hanging where I had just picked everything in sight. “Did these ripen in the time it took me to walk to the other side of the row?” I ask myself, knowing full well it is an impossibility, yet feeling it is the only logical explanation. Because I really checked carefully and thoroughly and there were no ready berries in sight a few minutes earlier in that very place. A squirmy feeling lurks in the back of my mind, hidden like the raspberries have been. Eventually, as I wait, it reveals itself; it’s a reminder that changing my angle of vision can expose what has previously been entirely hidden. It’s a reminder that from a certain perspective, I see something clearly (In this case that there are no ripe

raspberries). The certainty of it is reassuring. This is the way it is, the way things are. I can trust what I see, what I have experienced and what I know.

Then my perspective changes and *voilà!* I perceive differently. Things are not what they appeared to be just moments earlier. My reassurance in the certainty of what I know evaporates.

I am reminded of a situation several years ago when I was teaching at the local school. Close to the school is a small church and the current pastor was perceived to be a difficult man by many of us. He complained regularly about the teaching at the school – both what was taught and how. He complained about teachers who did Yoga and therefore didn’t belong in a public school system, because they were engaging in what he called the devil’s work. What particularly vexed me was his regular shooting of the local, wild coyotes wherever he found them, whether they loped across a meadow or walked over a frozen lake. It was this behavior that aroused my considerable antipathy towards him, but it bothered me to feel it with the intensity I did.

Things are not what they appeared to be just moments earlier. My reassurance in the certainty of what I know evaporates.





Then a friend told me a story about this man's life, about something that happened when he was five years old. My perception changed dramatically. I still felt revulsion for what to me were his unnecessary and cruel actions, but my dislike for him personally changed. The adage of 'hate the sin, love the sinner' comes to mind, though at that time I confess I did not feel love for this man. My appreciation and love for the local coyotes had me feeling disgust for what he was doing. Still, because I learned about his life, I was able to feel compassion for the young boy he had been and what had happened to him. Such trauma at

a young age would considerably impact any person's life. It was a step forward. It happened because something changed my perspective.

The Dalai Lama is credited with saying, "Every change of mind begins with a change of heart." I see that a change of heart happens, or can happen, when I am willing to adjust my stance, the way I think it all is and should be. Raspberries that reveal themselves where I was convinced they couldn't possibly be, because I had checked so carefully, is the metaphoric version of a change of heart – a change of vision. My

antipathy towards the man who was senselessly killing coyotes was softened because my heart was touched. Like the raspberries that teach me each year, there is a continual unfolding of learning and expansion. The certainty of my views on everything from finding all the ripe berries to what it means to be spiritual continues to be adjusted.

When Swami Radha studied in India with her guru, Swami Sivananda of Rishikesh, he instructed her to find the hidden meaning in the *Yogasanas*.

She asked for further explanation and he guided her to begin by exploring the headstand to find out what happens when your world is turned upside down. With this beginning she delved into meanings hidden in the poses. From the headstand, she learned that voluntarily turning cherished concepts and beliefs on their head was a path to independence. Choosing to explore the challenges and criticisms that come from both the external and internal world prepares the mind for meeting them with equanimity in situations not voluntarily chosen. Cherished ideas can have another perspective; we can expand the beliefs and concepts that hold us bound.

Like the raspberries that teach me each year, there is a continual unfolding of learning and expansion. The certainty of my views on everything from finding all the ripe berries to what it means to be spiritual continues to be adjusted.





Seeing from different angles is the antidote to right/wrong polarized thinking, to fundamentalism in its many forms. When I was young, I had so many ideas about spirituality, concepts about what it meant to lead a spiritual life, what it looked like, what the yogic teachings meant. Being young, my experience was also young. My

ideas and concepts needed to be updated, to expand and adjust in order to understand in new ways. My resistance and determination to cling to what I thought I knew created a barrier that took considerable force to remove. Fortunately, my teachers weren't interested in my concepts *about* a spiritual life. They were interested,

in the spirit of true friendship, in guiding me to discover, embody and live a genuine spiritual life.

This process didn't (and still doesn't) always feel comfortable. It is easier, however, when I willingly explore different perspectives and possibilities rather than having the events of life force them upon

me. The fact that raspberries are often found when I get down on my knees to investigate has not been lost on me. Humility is a quality that softens the edges of my concepts, that allows understanding to be absorbed more easily.

Surprise at discovering what I hadn't previously seen or understood continues to occur, which in itself is surprising, since I keep thinking that by now this lesson surely must have been learned. But this kind of learning isn't like memorizing a list of facts or names or numbers. Rather than thinking I've finally landed at the definitive view, I'm learning to be pleased to find a concept adjusted by a different perspective. The ultimate definitive view isn't defined at all. It belongs to a complete sphere of perception.

From many seasons of picking, finding berries at places not easily seen, I notice also I've begun to search in the hard-to-see places, underneath a cluster of leaves or behind a group of stalks. At times, I have resorted to crawling along the row on hands and knees, slithering under branches to look up. Then I find I've overlooked the berries right in front of me, easily accessible.

Raspberries continue to remind me, as the process of forget/remember continues. Hidden and revealed, they wait to be recognized, to be perceived.

It reminds me that what I am seeking might be right before me. The Quran records that Allah is "closer to you than your jugular vein," while the 15th century mystic poet Kabir wrote, "I laugh when I hear that the fish in the water is thirsty ... looking everywhere for water." It reminds me too that the Divine, Creator, God, Light is everywhere in everything. The raspberries seem to hide, but it is my awareness that is the culprit, my preconceptions and expectations. It could be said I'm hiding from them.

In a Yoga class of many years ago, we were asked to reflect on times and situations where the presence of the Divine had been working in our lives. I found it impossible to name a particular incident over

another, because I could see that there could be no time or place in my life where the Divine had not been present. If I said the Divine was present in one moment, it suggested not present in another. However, where I recognized in the moment the presence of the Divine was something different. For although I understand, in a deep and palpable way, the permeation of the Divine in everything, I often forget and act like I don't know this. From a song the words "At times you seem to hide from me; perhaps I hide from you" capture the insight. And raspberries continue to remind me, as the process of forget/remember continues. Hidden and revealed, they wait to be recognized, to be perceived.







AN ART ESSAY

# HUMAN *Evolution*



**BRIGITTE SMITH** was a refugee as a child, so the questions of why and where to came with a certain urgency. She was educated at art school in Germany and has taught there as a freelance artist all her life.

Here she explores various aspects of consciousness and evolution.

The beings seen in my pictures are symbols of Higher Spirits helping human beings to evolve and to become more conscious. They first appeared in my meditations. The caps on their heads are open on top in order for them to receive guidance. So far, I am unable to simply 'do' a picture; I have to wait until it comes. This is a totally different process to my usual professional way of working. After some anxiety, I had to accept that I am simply a servant and can only apply my will within the service. That state developed into a very grateful happiness.

## *Prayer*

### for the balance of the planet

Since the spiral is a symbol of human evolution, these Spirit helpers are trying to balance the situation on the planet using prayer.





In search of

## *Human Consciousness*

In 1900, Greek sponge divers found an antique shipwreck. Within it was something known as the Antikythera Mechanism, the first known analogue computer. Scientists could only X-ray it one hundred years later to discover the inner mechanism, and it is thought to possibly come from the school of Archimedes in Corinth or the famous ancient library of Pergamum. This inspired me to show this eternal urge in human beings to search and to strive. The released cranes are the freed thoughts.

## *Initiation*

Here the Spirit helper is giving an olive branch to a soul being initiated into learning. The Spirit helpers are mostly clad in forms of nature.







*Emergence*

Here a human being, not yet conscious, is being born out of plant-existence into the beginnings of consciousness.



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# The Role Of Laughter IN A MARRIAGE

DR. ICHAK ADIZES explores the qualities of a successful marriage, especially the vital roles of laughter and humor.



have been observing long-term marriages that seem to be happy marriages, and wondering what it is that keeps them together in this turbulent world we live in, where the divorce rate is high. I found a common denominator: they laugh a lot. The couples have incredible senses of humor.



Then, I watched some successful executives. The culture in their companies was not as stressed as one would expect. They were really not that sophisticated in their management or leadership either. The common denominator? They had a great sense of humor.

What is going on? Humor disarms.

Laughter is evoked when one exaggerates a phenomenon until it looks ridiculous. The phenomenon has, at its core, something which is true, which is then exaggerated. It becomes like a cartoon. Thus, it is funny.

Humor relaxes. Humor releases negative energy.

If you can laugh at your destiny, you can be happy because nothing is so serious that it calls one to suffer.

I said to myself, "I better try that in my marriage." While in the past I would get into an argument with my spouse over something that might become increasingly heated, I now try to see what is funny in it and react in a way that makes her laugh. When I succeed, she laughs and then hugs me.

What in the past was a cause for not speaking to one another for days is now a cause for hugging and laughing, and realizing nothing is worth being in pain over. All problems are laughable if you put your mind to it (I am not referring to tragedies).

If you can laugh at yourself, you can overcome much of the travails of modern life.

It is interesting that most comedians come from minority groups or oppressed groups that survive oppression with laughter. For example, the Jewish

people. Yiddish humor is well-known all over the world. The same goes for African Americans.

The more serious you are, the more you take the world as a burden. The more critical you are the more stress you bring to your life and to your marriage.

It is the same with work. Can you take problems not as crises, but just as problems that can be laughed at? If you can make other people laugh, you can disarm them and remove aggression.

Be careful though. When some people laugh, they are not really laughing. They are actually crying. Laughing is their way to release tension.

Also, be careful with cultural differences. More than once I've had to beg pardon from my audience because I used a joke which was supposed to make a point about the material being presented and I heard the audience gasp. All jokes are culturally based. They do not easily translate from one culture to another. In America and in Scandinavian countries it is not okay to make any jokes at the expense of women. But it is okay to laugh at men. This custom is totally not accepted in Serbia, where jokes about women are accepted but jokes about men are rejected.

Obviously, you have to be very careful and know when to laugh and when not to laugh, such as in tragic moments.

Dare to think, and even more, dare to share what I think,  
Dr Ichak Kalderon Adizes

Reprinted with permission from <http://www.ichakadizes.com/the-role-of-laughter-in-a-marriage/>.



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